

Improving Educational Quality (IEQ) Project

**IEQ2/GHANA FINAL REPORT:
THE IMPLEMENTATION OF
GHANA'S SCHOOL LANGUAGE POLICY**

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Report prepared by:

**Peter Amissah, Kingsley Andoh-Kumi, Samuel Asare Amoah,
Albert Awedoba, Fiifi Mensah, Eric Wilmot, and Shirley Miske**

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Table of Contents

Preface.....	iii
Abbreviations	v
Chapter One: Apala School and Erokosa Teacher Training College.....	1
Chapter Two: Awocha School and Blessed Virgin Teacher Training College.....	26
Chapter Three: Kapa School and Wosec Teacher Training College	43
Chapter Four: Noto School and Teacher Training College	56
Chapter Five: Nantwi School.....	86
Chapter Six: Medofo School, Aseret Teacher Training College and Sicnarf Teacher Training College	95

Preface

How does the implementation or non-implementation of a nation's school language policy affect the quality of primary education in a country where more than 60 languages are spoken? This is the question a team of nine researchers from three universities and the Ghana Education Service (GES) set out to explore in September 1999. At the invitation of the Director of the Curriculum, Research and Development Division of the GES, researchers from the Improving Educational Quality (IEQ) II project (funded by USAID/Ghana) commenced a multi-site case study research project to inform language policy discussions and decisions in Ghana and other countries facing similar challenges.

This linkage between research, policy, and practice is at the heart of the IEQ project, a long-term USAID global initiative that for more than a decade has worked side by side with host country colleagues to generate knowledge about how to improve teaching and learning. Researchers and educators conduct classroom-based research in specific country contexts. This knowledge is used to: inform policy dialogue; improve local practice; and develop an in-country capacity for monitoring and evaluating educational outcomes. Since 1991, more than two hundred individuals in fifteen institutions in eighteen countries have participated in an IEQ research activity.

This Final Report on *The Implementation of Ghana's School Language Policy* presents the findings from Phase I (Data Sets One and Two) and Phase II (Data Set Three) collected at six schools and six nearby teacher training colleges between September 1999 and June 2001. Each case study contains information common across sites. Each chapter also reflects the expertise and interests of its author (e.g., teacher preparation, pedagogy, linguistics, and anthropology) as well as the author's conclusions and recommendations for improving the quality of education in the schools and teacher training colleges of Ghana's multilingual society. The results of achievement testing and learning gains for two classes at each school site are currently being examined in the context of the rich qualitative data and will be available in March 2002.

The IEQ/Ghana research team includes: Joe Dzinyela (Coordinator), Eric Wilmot and Fiifi Mensah of the University of Cape Coast; Peter Amissah and Samuel Asare Amoah of the University College of Education - Winneba; Kingsley Andoh-Kumi and Albert Awedoba of University of Ghana/Legon; Rosamond Asante-Frempong and Chris Dowuona-Hammond of the Ghana Education Service; Emma Gymera of The Mitchell Group; and Shirley Miske, IEQ Technical Adviser. We would like to acknowledge the hundreds of individuals who participated in IEQII and particularly the support of USAID/Ghana. Although they and the institutions they represent are too numerous to mention, we

are grateful to each one and without their assistance and cooperation this work would not have been possible.

Shirley Miske

Technical Advisor

Improving Educational Quality II Project/Ghana

Abbreviations

BECE	Basic Education Certificate Examination (JSS Final Examination)
G.C.E.	General Certificate of Education
GES	Ghana Education Service
GILLBT	Ghana Institute of Linguistics, Literacy, and Bible Translation
GTZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (German Technical International Development Cooperation Service Company)
IEQ	Improving Educational Quality
ILP	Improving Learning through Partnership Project (QUIPS project component)
JSS	Junior Secondary School
MSLC	Middle School Leaving Certificate
MOE	Ministry of Education
MoI	Medium of Instruction
P1 - P6	Primary 1 through Primary 6
PME	Program Monitoring and Evaluation (QUIPS project component)
PTA	Parent Teacher Association
PS1 – PS3	TTC First Year through Third Year Students
QUIPS	Quality Improvement in Primary Schools (MOE/USAID Primary Education Reform Project)
RME	Religious and Moral Education
SMC	School Management Committee
SSS	Senior Secondary School
TED	Teacher Education Division (GES)
TTC	Teacher Training College
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

Chapter One: Apala School and Erokosa Teacher Training College

BY

KINGSLEY ANDOH-KUMI

University of Ghana/Legon

APALA PRIMARY SCHOOL

The IEQ team made three visits to the primary schools. The first visit was in November 1999, and second was in May/June 2000. For the first visit the team studied Primary Class One through Four (P1 through P4) and observed lessons in all four classes. During the second visit the lesson observations concentrated on P2 and P3 and a focus group discussion was held with the parents of selected pupils in our study. The third visit was mainly devoted to administering achievement tests in English and Mathematics and sharing research findings with the community. A summary of the findings is presented below under the following headings: community profile, school profile, attitudes and perceptions of the language policy and language use, language use inside and outside the classroom, teaching and learning, materials, and conclusions and implications.

COMMUNITY PROFILE

Apala is a small rural community in the West Akim District in the Eastern Region of Ghana. The community comprises a number of farm settlements populated by migrants from other parts of the Eastern and Greater Accra Regions. Apala village itself, the focal point of the community, has a population of less than 2000 people. It is located five kilometers off the main road. The road from the main one to Apala village as well as to the surrounding villages is an untarred feeder road.

This community is ethnically heterogeneous--the Anums, the Krobos, the Ewes, and the Akyems are the main ethnic groups. The languages spoken in this community are Guan, Dangme, Ewe, and Akan (Twi). Akan (Twi) is, however, the predominant or prevalent language of the area.

The primary occupation of this community is farming--mainly cocoa and food crop farming. The economy is basically the subsistence type. There are, however, some petty traders, especially among the

women. Some of the men have added hunting and/or palm-wine tapping to their farming occupation. In the heart of the village is a garri-making project supported by 31st December Women Movement.¹

Apala has permanent “community” buildings including church buildings, a Cocoa Board buying and storage center, and a house for CASHPRO, an agency that buys cocoa and other cash crops such as coffee. The buildings are found on either side of the only road that passes through the village. A borehole supplies water to the community; they do not have electricity.

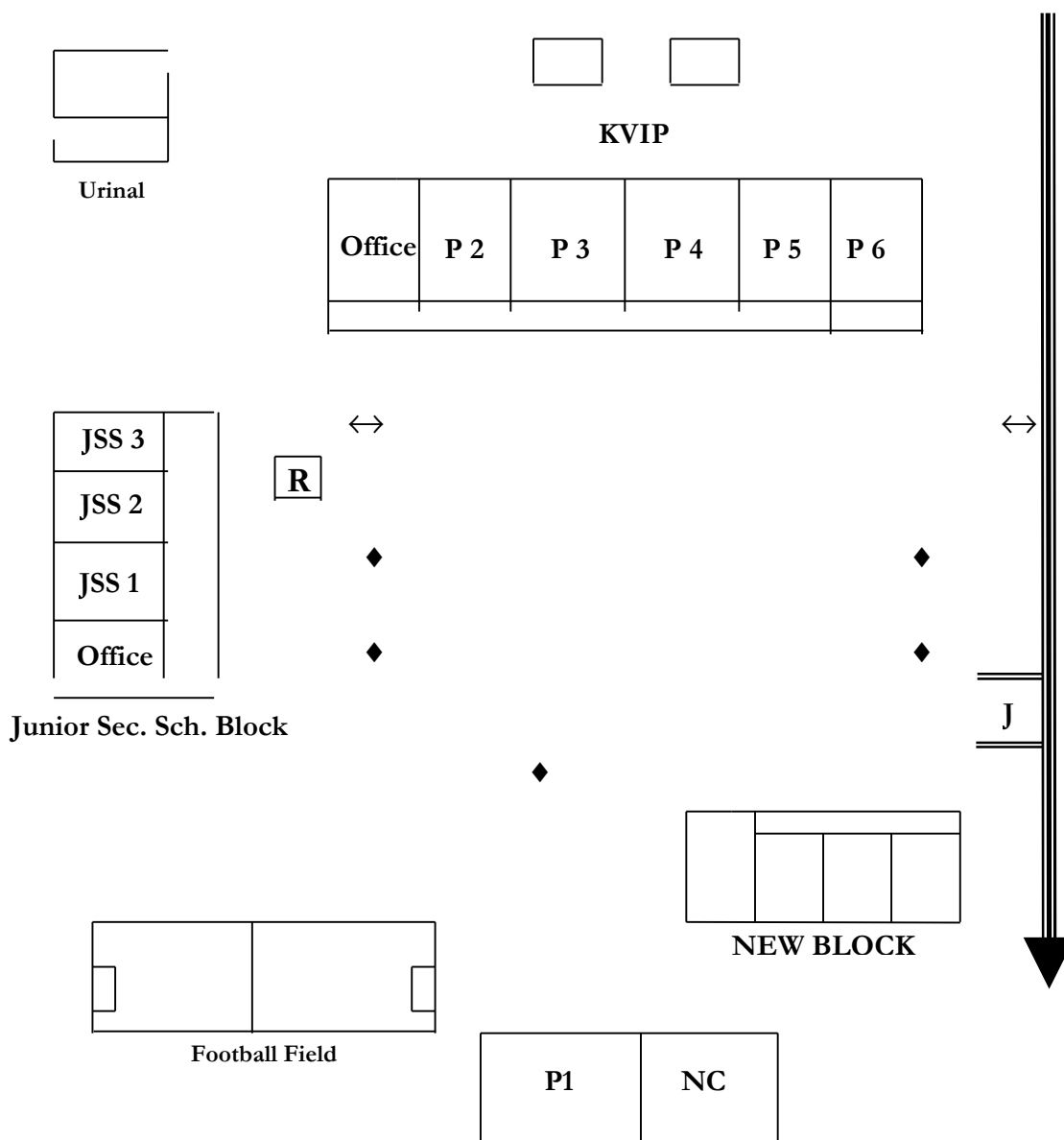
The catchment communities are relatively autonomous, under their own *odikro* or chief of a small community. All of the catchment communities are under one *odikro*, who owes political allegiance to the *okyenbene*, the *omanbene* (the paramount chief) of Akyem Abuakwa.

SCHOOL PROFILE

Upon entering the village, the first set of buildings on the right side of the main road house the Apala Primary School, a public school under the direct supervision of the Ghana Education Service (GES), built around 1952. It comprises two blocks: one for primary and the other, newer block for Junior Secondary School (JSS). The primary school block is built from mud and roofed with corrugated iron sheets. P1 is temporarily housed in a bamboo shelter, about 200 meters from the main primary school building. P2 through P6 classrooms have dwarf walls approximately one meter high and are virtually open to the outside. The buildings are very old; they were built in the early 1950s when the school was new. They have leaking roofs and the rooms have no ceilings. A new block is being constructed with assistance from USAID and the district assembly that will house three classrooms, an office, and a store. The number of pupils’ chairs and tables seem adequate, but there are no cupboards. Therefore, textbooks are stored in the head teacher’s office.

The school population is 130 female and 119 male pupils. Eleven female pupils are repeating; 20 are new, and 98 are continuing. The males have 14 repeaters, 13 new, and 92 continuing pupils. The records indicate that for the 1998-1999 academic year there were no dropouts. The prevalent language of the area is Akan (Twi), but for most pupils this is a second language. Researchers’ impressions were that the level of spoken English among the children is relatively high for a rural school. Pupils speak mostly Akan (Twi) among themselves when on break and when they are having private conversations in class.

¹ Garri is a kind of food prepared from cassava.

DIAGRAM 1. APALA School

Apala Primary and JSS are under one head teacher. He holds a Four-Year Teachers Certificate “A” and has been teaching for 33 years. He has spent nine years as head teacher at Apala where he supervises 11 teachers. He speaks English, Twi, and Fante (Akan). He writes English and Twi and says he is capable of teaching Twi (Akuapem), although his mother tongue (L1) is Fante.

The primary school has six classroom teachers, two of whom are female (P1 and P2). All the teachers speak Twi, although not all of them are native speakers. Akan is the predominant language of the community, but the only non-Akan teacher handles P1!

More information is presented here on the P1 through P4 teachers, the group on whom the research focused. All Apala teachers have been teaching at this school since they left college. Their ages range from 25 years to 50 years. The qualifications of the teachers are similar; three have the Teacher's Certificate "A" (Four-Year Post-Middle School) and one has the Teacher's Certificate "A" (Three-Year Post-Secondary School). Two teachers have the GCE "O" Level certificate. Their teaching experiences span four to 17 years.

Two teachers have Twi as their first language, one has Ewe, and yet another has Guan. Three of the teachers are trilingual in their L1, a Ghanaian L2, and English, while the fourth is bilingual in his L1 and English. Three are literate in Akuapem (Twi) and English, and one claims literacy in Ewe, Ga and English. All the teachers indicate that they are capable of teaching Twi as a subject. Three teachers claim they are capable of using Twi as the medium of instruction (MoI).

ATTITUDES AND PERCEPTIONS OF LANGUAGE POLICY AND LANGUAGE USE

Community

During the first visit researchers interviewed two community members, the School Management Committee (SMC) chairman and the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) chairman. The SMC chairman is also the Mankrado of Alapa. He is 70 years old and a farmer. He holds the Middle School Leaving Certificate (MSLC). There are 18 people in his household, whose ages range from seven to 45 years. He states that the prevalent language of the village is Twi and the languages of the market are Krobo and Twi.

The SMC chairman indicates that the teachers and pupils use English and Twi in class. He is fully aware of the official school language policy and quotes it correctly. He says he prefers that a mixture of Twi and English be used in teaching the pupils at primary, but his utterances indicate that he is especially concerned about English. He states:

We visit the school to see how teachers are using Twi and English in teaching, and controlling their lessons and classes. When we meet the children we speak to them in English, asking them "How are you?" etc. When they make mistakes we correct them.

We meet teachers and encourage teachers to assist pupils learn English. They, too, are doing their best. They are aware of our concerns.

The PTA chairman is 60 years old. He acknowledges that the language of the district is Twi (Akyem), but says that the prevalent languages of the village are Guan (Anum) and Krobo, and the languages of the market are Krobo, Twi, and Anum.

On the official school language policy the PTA chairman has this to say:

I have heard about it but I don't know how it is being implemented. I am not sure what it says. I cannot say whether I am assisting [with policy implementation] or not since I don't know the policy.

He seems to prefer Early-English medium (English as medium of instruction from P1). He says:

I helped to decide that English should be the medium. Pupils are expected to greet in English after classes, to speak English among themselves after classes.

I think that since English is the official language it should be the medium of instruction in order to lay a good foundation.

Parents

During the first round of data collection researchers interviewed 15 parents or guardians; primarily men. Only two of the interviewees were guardians; 13 were parents. Most all were farmers. Two were traders and one had palm-wine tapping as an additional occupation. There were four to nine children in a household with ages ranging from four months to 38 years.

The parents and guardians represented the different ethnic backgrounds of members of the community. This was clearly reflected in their mother tongues and the languages spoken at home – Twi, Ewe, Guan, and Dangme (Krobo). A few of them said they were literate in English and/or Twi; only one indicated literacy in Ga. One parent said that Krobo (Dangme), Twi and English were spoken at home. Out of the 15 parents and guardians interviewed, two had the MSLC, the rest had completed school through P3 or P4, Middle School Form 1, or never went to school at all.

Nearly all the selected parents and guardians indicated that they preferred English as MoI rather than the prevalent language of the locality, Twi. Some of the reasons they gave for their preference for English include the following:

English is preferred because she [daughter] can learn faster and better. The more English you can speak the better your education.

I prefer English. It is a mark of good education.

English. I enjoy listening to people speak English. I would want my children to be fluent in English. The community especially would want the children to speak English.

My preference is English. The reason is that the English language is the standard, and is also the international language. So without speaking or understanding the English language will not augur well for our children.

I prefer the English language to the local language. English language is an international language for the nation. So the children must be taught right from P1. Also the local language cannot be used every place. In the offices and interviews for instance, it is the English language that is generally used. So the English language must be taught even from the KG [kindergarten] level.

I prefer her to be taught in English, because English can take her far, more than the local language would. Even outside Ghana, she can no longer speak the local language.

However, two parents indicated that they preferred the use of both English and the local language (i.e., bilingual education). The following are some of their reasons:

I would like my daughter to be taught in both English and the local language. That is the easiest way she can learn the English language. That will also enable her to learn and write the local language.

English and Twi; they are all necessary. But I will want to them speak English well.

Researchers conducted a focus group discussion with the parents during the second data collection. The first data collection set revealed that the majority of parents, PTA and SMC chairmen, as well as the teachers were all in favor of English-only medium for the children. The purpose of the focus group discussion was to let parents be aware of and understand the school language policy. The policy was explained followed by discussion. The parents all agreed that it was advantageous to use the L1 as medium at the lower primary (P1 through P3). They agreed that the L1 should be used in P1 through P3. However, they advocated for bilingual education and stressed the need to make children proficient in both the mother tongue and English. However, subsequent discussions showed that they had not fully understood the language policy and further education about the policy is therefore necessary.

Parents were also interviewed to ascertain their attitudes or opinions on the use of the Ghanaian language as MoI. All the parents interviewed indicated they believe that the Apala teachers were adequately prepared to teach in the Ghanaian language. They also thought that a lot of activities in the school fostered the pupils' attitudes towards their L1. They were divided, however, on the assertion that the teachers did not feel like teaching in Twi because all the textbooks were written in English. Whilst half the number agreed that the teachers found it difficult to introduce topics using the medium of the Ghanaian language, the others disagreed with this assertion.

All parents but two agreed that the children would understand their lessons better if they were taught their lessons in the Ghanaian language. (Two were uncertain and therefore gave no response.) This may explain why the majority of the parents disagreed with the suggestion that it was a waste of time to teach the Ghanaian language in the school since the children already speak the local Ghanaian language. The majority of the parents felt the children ought to be taught in English from the first year because that would enable them learn English. This was premised on their notion that the community respect people who are fluent in English more than those who are fluent in Twi.

The parents were asked to grade the various subjects in the order of their importance. The subjects that occupied the first place of importance were English and Mathematics. Religious and Moral Education (RME) was rated second in order of importance, followed by Integrated Science. Fourth in importance was Ghanaian language. Environmental Studies was ranked fifth and Music and Dance placed sixth in order of importance. One parent felt that all the subjects were equally important or relevant because some children may benefit from each of the subjects.

Teachers

The head teacher was aware of the government's school language policy and he was able to state it correctly. However, he did not have a copy of the document in his office. When asked about the pupils' attitude towards the use of English as a language of instruction, he said:

Pupils enjoy it. Pupils appreciate being taught in English, especially where the teacher has prepared adequately and does not use unfamiliar words.

On the use of Ghanaian language as MoI, he said:

We do not as a policy use the Ghanaian language as medium of instruction. When pupils fail to comprehend a lesson or a subject because unfamiliar English words are introduced, then pupils find the lesson interesting when the Ghanaian language is used to explain things to them.

He was not personally opposed to the language policy, however, and claimed:

We have in-service training here in the school and it helps us to help each other deal with difficult issues concerning the implementation of the policy.

Our policy is to use English as the MoI. However, the Ghanaian language is used to explain subjects to enhance pupils' understanding where English does not seem satisfactory.

The teachers all claimed that they were aware of the school language policy. They all stated it correctly, except the P2 teacher who thought the policy called for Ghanaian language to be used as MoI for all six years of primary school education. They all thought that they would need training in the use of the Ghanaian language if they were to implement the policy successfully. One teacher stated, "The language policy will work if it is implemented."

Three of the teachers would prefer Early English medium. The following are some of their statements:

It is good because if you understand English it helps to communicate with many people who do not speak or understand your native language.

I would wish to see everybody learn the English language.

At staff meetings we are advised to use the English language often to enable pupils pick it [up] and perform better in it.

The P1 teacher, however, thought that bilingual education would be very ideal.

During the team's second visit, the P1 through P4 teachers were again interviewed on their attitudes towards Ghanaian languages and their use in education. This was to find out whether they had changed their position.

With the exception of the P1 teacher, all the teachers affirmed that they use English as MoI for all subjects except the Ghanaian language. The P1 teacher indicated that at the beginning she was using English but later she realized the children did not understand the lessons, and also class participation was low. She therefore decided to switch from English to Twi as MoI.

Pupils

Since the pupils are the beneficiaries of what happens in the schools, this study and report tend to give them more focus. Four pupils, two boys and two girls were randomly selected for intensive observation and interview from each of the P1 through P4 classes.

In P1, three of the selected pupils were six years old and one girl was seven years. One pupil claims she speaks Krobo, two speak Guan (Anum) and the other, Twi. Their L1s are Krobo, Anum and Twi respectively. All four pupils said they would like to ask and answer questions in class in Twi. However, two of them said they would like their teacher to teach them in English whilst the other two would prefer being taught in Twi and English. Specifically, they would like to be taught Maths in Twi. The main reasons were as follows:

I understand her in the local language more than in English.

When teacher teaches Maths I feel uncomfortable, but much more at ease when it is done in Twi.

When the pupils were asked what language they thought their teacher should use to teach, three of them said they would like English. One gave no reason, the other two said:

I would like to be taught in English, because I want to learn English.

I want to learn from her.

The pupil who indicated preference for Twi said, "I want to understand the lesson thoroughly."

The P2 pupils' ages ranged from seven years to ten years. Three pupils' L1 is Guan whilst the other one's L1 is Krobo (Dangme). However, pupils' abilities range from monolingual to multilingual. One pupil claims to speak only Guan; a second pupil speaks Guan plus Twi; the third speaks Guan, Twi and English; and the fourth speaks Guan, Twi, English, and Krobo.

Three out of four P2 pupils said they would prefer their teacher to use English when teaching. Two of them would like to ask and answer questions in English; one in Twi; and the fourth, Twi and English. One pupil preferred that the teacher handled Maths in English; one pupil liked both English and Twi and a third claimed to understand better in Twi. Three pupils thought their teacher should use English to teach. Interestingly, the pupil who claimed better understanding when Mathematics was taught in Twi said the teacher should use English to teach and said, "We are happy." One pupil would like the teacher to use Twi to teach. She said, "I just prefer Twi."

The selected P3 pupils were between nine and 14 years old. Two pupils said they speak Ewe and Twi; one speaks Anum, Twi and English; the fourth speaks Twi, Krobo and English. Two pupils' L1 is Ewe; another, Twi; and another, Anum. One pupil said that he enjoyed the English lesson--and said he couldn't speak Twi well. The other three claimed they enjoyed the Twi lesson. One said, "I enjoy it because I understand what is taught." Three pupils said they would prefer their teacher to use English when teaching; one preferred Twi. Two of them would like to ask and answer questions in English; one would like to ask questions in English and answer questions in Twi. One pupil would want to ask and answer questions in Ewe.

When we asked them to indicate how they felt when Mathematics was taught in English or the Ghanaian language, they replied:

When it is done in English, I don't feel confident; when it is in Twi, I feel good; I understand it better.

In English, I don't feel good. I would prefer Twi.

In English, I enjoy it; in Twi, I like it too.

I don't like it in Twi. I'll prefer it in English.

Three pupils thought their teacher should use English to teach. Their reasons were:

I am not good in English, so I want it to be used often so that I can learn it faster.

I want to speak English fluently because I would like to be a teacher.

English is preferred because I want to speak it English fluently.

The only pupil who thought that the teacher should use Twi to teach said, "I understand it better in Twi."

Three of the P4 pupils are nine years old; the fourth is 13 years old. All four are non-Akan natives – three of them have Guan as their L1, whilst one has Krobo as his L1. Two pupils speak Twi and Guan; one speaks Krobo and English, and another speaks Twi, Guan, and English. Two speak Guan at home; one speaks Krobo and another speaks Twi at home. Three of them claimed to speak Twi and English at school, while one speaks Krobo and English.

Three of the selected pupils said they would prefer their teacher to use English when teaching; one preferred Twi. However, all of them would like to ask and answer questions in English. Three of them preferred that the teacher handle Mathematics in English. Here are the reasons given by two of them:

It's nice to be taught in English.

English makes us learn better.

The fourth pupil said she had better understanding when Mathematics was taught in Twi.

All the pupils thought their teacher should use English to teach. Their reasons were that in this way they learned to use the English language; they learned better; and they had better understanding. Interestingly, the pupil who claimed better understanding when Mathematics was taught in Twi indicated that the teacher should use English to teach and said: "for better understanding."

LANGUAGE USE INSIDE AND OUTSIDE CLASSROOM

The pupils at Apala come from four different linguistic groups but they all speak the language of the area, Twi. Our observations revealed that pupils were active, vocal, and participated highly in lessons when the teachers switched from English to Twi. The multilingual nature of the setting and the varied perceptions of pupils come alive when the pupils' claims are revealed about who interacts with whom in which language inside and outside of class.

All four P1 pupils claimed that they spoke Twi at school. Two said they spoke Guan (Anum) with friends; one said he spoke Twi and Guan and the other, Twi. One pupil said he used the Ghanaian language "because I don't understand any other language." All four pupils said that they spoke with their teacher in Twi both in class and during break time. Observations revealed that the P1 teacher used English for Mathematics and English, and Twi for Environmental Studies, Religious and Moral Education, and the Ghanaian language. At times she mixed English and Twi in teaching Mathematics. It is interesting to note that the P1 teacher is the only non-native speaker of Twi. She learnt Twi in the training college.

Two P2 pupils said they spoke only Twi at school and two said they spoke both Twi and English. Two pupils claimed that the teacher and pupils used both English and Twi in class; the other two said that only Twi was used in class. The research team's observations did not confirm these claims, however. Three pupils claimed that the teacher talked to other pupils in English and Twi but one pupil said that the teacher talked to other pupils in English only. Three pupils said they talked to their teacher in English in class; the other talked to the teacher in Twi and English. They all said that during break time they talked to their teacher in Twi. All four pupils said they spoke Twi with friends in class as well as during break time. Their reasons were varied.

She speaks Twi.

I like Twi.

We understand it better.

They [other pupils] don't speak Guan.

At school, one P3 pupil speaks English, another speaks Twi and two speak Twi and English. Two pupils claimed that the teacher and pupils used English and Twi in class; one said only English was used and the other said that only Twi was used in class. Three pupils spoke Twi with friends in class. Their reasons were as follows:

We speak Twi better than any other language.

There are a few Ewes; my friends speak Twi, they are not good in English

It is the language we speak fluently

One pupil speaks English to friends. He said, "The teachers have warned us not to speak Twi." Two pupils said they spoke Twi to their friends during the break time; one said he spoke Twi and Ewe, and the other spoke English to friends. The one who speaks Ewe and Twi explained, "Some of my friends are Akans and others are Ewes who don't speak Twi well; some of my friends don't speak Twi." The pupil who claimed to speak English with friends during break time said, "We want to improve our English.

Three P3 pupils claimed that in class the teacher talked to them in Twi. One said, "Sometimes the teacher talks to me in English and I reply in Twi." One pupil said the teacher spoke to him in both English and Twi. Three said the teacher talked to other pupils in English but one pupil said the teacher talked to other pupils in Twi only.

Two of the pupils said that they talked to their teacher in English in class, but one qualified this, saying, "When I can't express myself well in English, I use Twi." One talked to the teacher in Twi and English and the other in Twi only. Three pupils claimed that during break time they talked to their teacher in Twi, while the fourth one talked to the teacher in English only.

Three P4 pupils claimed that the teacher and pupils used English and Twi in class; the other one said that Twi was used in class. Two pupils said they spoke Twi with friends in class. One said, "because it is more familiar;" the other said, "they don't understand English or Krobo." One claimed to speak

Guan to friends; the other, Twi and English. He said, "Teacher encourages us to speak English." Three pupils indicated that they spoke Twi to their friends during the break time; one said he spoke Krobo. One pupil further explained that she spoke Guan with Guan speakers and Twi with the others.

All four pupils claimed that in class the teacher talked to them in English. However, three said the teacher talked to them in Twi at other times; the fourth pupil still claimed the teacher talked to her in English. Two of them claimed the teacher talked to other pupils in English and Twi, whilst two pupils said that the teacher talked to other pupils in English only.

Two of the selected pupils indicated that they talked to their teacher in English in class; the other two talked to their teacher in Twi and English. Again, two pupils claimed that during break time they talked to their teacher in Twi, while the other two talked to their teacher in Twi only.

The teachers in P2 through P4 used English to teach all subjects except the Ghanaian language. On occasion, however, the teachers switched to Twi to explain difficult concepts or ideas. But after the explanation was done they would go back to English. Outside the classroom teachers interacted with pupils in both English and Twi. They also spoke to each other in English and Twi. On certain occasions researchers observed teachers even introduce the Ghanaian Language lessons in English.

In P2 through P4 the pupils made the effort to speak to the teacher in English, either in a form of questions or as answers to the teacher's questions. Only a few pupil-pupil interactions in class were in English. Most of the pupils talked to their peers in a Ghanaian language. The situation was the same outside the classroom – Twi was used more than English.

On the second data collection visit the P2 teacher had shifted from her position of English-only to "dual" language use. She now taught in both Twi and English and encouraged her pupils to make their contributions in Twi if they so wished. This was particularly so with Religious and Moral Education, and Environmental Studies. Below are excerpts from her lessons.

In the context of a Religious and Moral Education lesson on the wives of the prophet Samuel from the Hebrew Scriptures, the teacher asked the pupils what happens in families where a man has more than one wife.

Teacher: What do the wives do sometimes? eden na eye a, w?ye?

Response: W?ko. (They fight.)

Teacher: Good. They fight. When the rivals fight, what do you do? Se akorafo no ko a, den na w?ye?

Responses: Yebepata w?n. Mesu etc. (We separate them, I cry, etc.)

Teacher: Se wone Hanna a, anka den na wobeka akyere ?s?fo no. (If you were Hannah, what would you tell the priest?)

Responses: Mehwehwe ba. (I am looking for a child.)

Menni ba. (I don't have a child.)

Menom nsa. (I am not drunk.)

Mehwehwe ba, enti na manom nsa no.

(I am looking for a child, so I am not drunk.)

Meka se menom nsa na mmom merehwehwe ba.

(I'll say that I am not drunk and that I am looking for a child.)

In a Mathematics lesson:

Teacher: Yew? ?kwan foforo a yebetumi de aye eyi. Yefre no multiplication. eye ?kwan tiaa a yefa so bu saa nkontaa yi. Yefre saa ?kwan yi multiplication. (We have another way of solving this problem. It is called multiplication. We have a short way of solving this problem. This way is called multiplication. All of you!)

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Researchers observed lessons in five subject areas in P1 through P4. Teachers' strategies were not very different and certain patterns emerged. The lessons started with "Class, stand! Sit! Stand! Sit!" They continued with either a rhyme, a song (a "motivator"), or both. This normally took two to five minutes.

For the language classes, the teachers started the actual lesson by going through the "difficult" words and expressions with the pupils. The teacher usually wrote the words or expressions on the blackboard. Then the teacher read the words or expressions and the pupils repeated after him or her – the whole class, in groups, and individually. If it was a reading and comprehension lesson the teacher then read the text once or twice, followed by individual and group reading. Then there was silent reading which was also followed by questions and answers based on the text. Pupils were called on at times to come to the blackboard and write their answers and then they were asked to do the work in

their exercise books. If it was content work, such as grammar, the teacher gave some explanation, offered examples as illustration, asked pupils to also give their own examples, and asked pupils to come to board to write out their answers. This might be followed by written exercises in the pupils' exercise books.

For Mathematics the lesson started with the revision or review of previous work through questions and answers and blackboard work. The previous work was then linked with the lesson of the day. The teacher explained through questions and answers. Pupils were invited to the blackboard to work sums or solve problems. Pupils then worked sums from their textbooks in their exercise books and teacher would go round to check on pupils' work.

For the other subjects the pattern was almost similar to the above – explanation by teacher, choral repetition, individual repetition, presentation of facts through questions and answers, blackboard work and seatwork assignments.

During the second data collection, the P3 teacher involved pupils by using word and sentence strips to teach new English words, manipulative materials, and other creative teaching methods. As he did during the first visit, he taught all lessons in English except Twi (the Ghanaian Language subject). He encouraged his pupils to use English in the classroom. The pattern of his teaching did not differ markedly from that which we observed during the first visit.

For the P2 teacher the pattern of presentation also was not markedly different from what we observed from our first visit, though this time round pupils were made to participate more through speech and other learning activities. For example, they were encouraged to come to the board and work out sums and explain their procedures to the whole class.

MATERIALS

The textbook situation during our first visit was not encouraging. Access to textbooks varied according to class level for Ghanaian Language, English, and Mathematics. There were no textbooks for Environmental Studies in P1 through P3 or for Religious and Moral Education in P1 through P4. Although a new Environmental Studies syllabus had been written and disseminated, to date no textbook had been published that followed the syllabus. Hence, teachers either used outdated books that followed the old syllabus, or created their own teaching and learning materials. Teaching and learning materials such as wall charts and flash cards were all in English.

For us, what was most interesting in this study of the implementation of the school language policy was that there were no textbooks for Ghanaian languages. (Apala Primary School uses the Nimdee Kwan [The Way To Knowledge] supplementary reader series as textbooks.) Also, there was not a single textbook in the lower primary that was written in the Ghanaian language.

The 45 pupils in P1 had 43 Ghanaian Language ‘textbooks’, a ratio of about one textbook to one pupil (1:1). There was a similar ratio for English Language textbooks (1:1). For Mathematics, they had 60 textbooks, more than one per pupil. There were no textbooks for Environmental Studies, and Religious and Moral Education.

In P2 there were 15 Ghanaian Language ‘textbooks’ for 45 pupils (1:3); 10 English Language textbooks (about 1:5); and 15 Mathematics textbooks (1:3). Again there were no books for Environmental Studies, and Religious and Moral Education.

There were 44 pupils in the P3 class. There were no textbooks for any of the subjects for P3 pupils. (The head teacher confirmed that P3 had serious textbook problems.)

The P4 class also had 44 pupils. There were 19 Ghanaian Language textbooks, 10 English language textbooks, 21 textbooks for Mathematics, and 21 Science textbooks. These gave the following ratios respectively: 1:2; 1:4; 1:2 and 1:2.

Researchers noticed some improvement in the textbook situation during the second visit. The school had received copies of the basic textbooks for English and Mathematics from another project funded by the British Department for International Development. The PTA had also encouraged its members to purchase these basic books for their children’s use at home. Hence, for P1 the pupil-textbook ratio was 1:1 for the Ghanaian Language, Mathematics and English. In P2 the ratio for the Ghanaian Language and Mathematics was 2:1 and 1:1) for English. Again there were no books for Religious and Moral Education, and Environmental Studies.

SHARING RESEARCH FINDINGS WITH THE COMMUNITY

The IEQ 2 project has a built in process of sharing the major research findings with the community that is studied. It was therefore decided to hold a meeting with the Alapa community during the third visit. Word was sent round the first day of the visit and a meeting was held on the second day of the visit. About 60 people attended the meeting.

The meeting started with the head teacher introducing the IEQ researchers and the opinion leaders of the community. Then the community members present were asked to introduce themselves and were informed of the purpose of the meeting. This was followed by a brief overview in Twi of the IEQ 2 research and the main findings on the Alapa School. Copies of the summary of presentation were distributed to members presented. (This handout was written in English.)

After the presentation members were allowed to ask questions and make comments and suggestions. The discussions in Twi centered on how to improve the quality of learning among the children. Members more or less agreed with the findings of the research and accepted that the use of Twi might

enhance learning. However, they wanted bilingual education, stressing on the need for the children to be proficient in English without sacrificing solid literacy in the Ghanaian language. To enhance learning generally it was suggested that the school should furnish parents with the list of textbooks at the end of each school year, so parents would make all efforts to procure them for their children. The PTA chairman implored all parents to make some sacrifices and buy the necessary books that their wards may need.

EROKOSA TEACHER TRAINING COLLEGE

Our observations in the Primary School revealed that:

- The Primary 1 through 4 teachers' knowledge and proficiency in the Ghanaian Language were quite low.
- Teachers lacked the knowledge of L1 teaching principles and methodology
- Teachers had some difficulty using the Ghanaian Language as MoI, when it was necessary for them to do so.

It became necessary for the IEQ team, therefore, to move to the teacher training college (TTC) to find out what preparations the teacher trainees go through to help them “implement” the school language policy. Erokosa TTC was chosen because it was close to Apala and was likely to produce teachers for the district in which Apala is situated.

The team visited Erokosa in May 2001. They spent three days there – May 9-11, 2001. The second day of the visit did not yield much since for most of the day the teachers were meeting with a team from the German donor organization GTZ on the use of the new methodologies that the GTZ had produced for using Ghanaian Language materials in the training colleges.

EROKOSA TEACHER TRAINING COLLEGE PROFILE

Erokosa is co-educational institution located in the Eastern Region of Ghana. It was built by the Seventh Day Adventist mission and started as a mission college. However, now it is a public institution, run by the Teacher Education Department (TED) of the GES. The college admits students from all over the country. It is a ‘boarding’ training college. The college offers five Ghanaian languages – Twi, Fante, Ga, Dangme and Ewe.

ATTITUDES AND PERCEPTIONS OF LANGUAGE POLICY AND USE IN SCHOOLS

Administrators

The college has a principal and two vice principals (administration and academic). However, due to the numerous activities that were going on at the time of the visit, only the principal could be interviewed.

The principal is a native Twi speaker from the Eastern Region. He studied Twi in primary school and he is literate. He has a very long teaching experience at various levels of education, including ten years teaching experience at Erokosa TTC where he teaches Economics and Social Studies. He said that he would love to teach his lessons in Twi, for he thought his students would benefit more if he were to teach them Economics and Social Studies in the Ghanaian language.

He says that his college offers Twi as a subject; however, he says that some students cannot speak Twi and therefore the college offers other languages such as Ga and Ewe. He agrees there is a need for the study of Ghanaian languages in the TTC and feels that the Ghanaian language should be given more time on the timetable.

The principal is very much aware of the government's language policy for school. However, he does not personally approve of the policy in its present form. He claims the policy retards the development and understanding of the English language.

... even P6 pupils cannot speak English. On the other hand, in the private schools, children can read and write English at earlier stages.

He further declares:

In the absence of an objective for a national language policy, it is best to have English as medium in all schools. The Ghanaian language should be taught and emphasized, however.

In his college he does his best to promote the teaching and learning of the Ghanaian language. He says:

We do our best to encourage and promote the teaching and learning of the Ghanaian language. Students must pass in all subjects including Ghanaian language. We make sure that students take it seriously, as seriously as any other subject. We look for additional periods on the timetable for Ga. We have extended the teaching of this subject beyond second year.

He also thinks that the Ghanaian language should be a core subject at the Senior Secondary School (SSS) level and other levels so that the TTC entrant is not disadvantaged. He advocates for the education of the public on the importance of Ghanaian languages.

Tutors

Researchers interviewed 12 tutors and the principal at the Erokosa TTC. The tutors included two teachers of English, two RME tutors, three Ghanaian Language and Culture tutors, two Life Skills/Social and Environmental Studies tutors and one each for the following subjects: Mathematics, Science, and Music and Dance.

Eight of the tutors are from the Eastern Region, one from Ashanti and three from the Central Region. Only one tutor is Dangme (Krobo), the other 11 tutors are all Akan speakers. The tutors' teaching experiences at the TTC level range from one to 14 years. Nine of the 12 are literate in Twi, one is literate in Ga and Dangme, and one in Fante. One tutor claims she is not literate in any Ghanaian language. All the tutors, except one (the one literate in Ga/Dangme) acquired their literacy through formal education. The majority (10) of the tutors learnt the Ghanaian language up to the secondary school level. Seven tutors studied the Ghanaian language at the TTC level. The Ghanaian language tutors, of course, have a university degree in the language they teach. However, apart from the Ghanaian language tutors, none of the tutors indicated that s/he taught in the Ghanaian language.

All 12 tutors indicate that they are aware of the school language policy. Nine out of 12 have a positive attitude towards the policy, two of them expressed reservations on the policy. The Science teacher has a negative attitude towards the policy and advocates an early English-medium policy. (Incidentally, she is the teacher with the least experience at this level – one year TTC teaching experience.) Those who support the language policy adduce various reasons. Their responses include:

There is no lingua franca, so the local language should be used.

We reason in our mother tongue before we transfer to other languages.

The use of the Ghanaian language enables children to understand the lessons better.

It links the children's home background with that of the school.

It enhances the children's acquisition of English.

I think using it for instructional purposes is far more effective than using a foreign language since most children come to school with a good familiarity with the Ghanaian language.

The comment from the Mathematics tutor sums up all the comments of the pro-language policy:

When children enter school for the first time, they should not be confronted with a stark difference between home and school environments. There is the need for a bridge. Very early use of English would result in alienation. The child reasons in the local language and should therefore be taught in it.

As already indicated, three tutors are opposed to the language policy. The Science teacher said, “It is alright to use the Ghanaian as MoI for teaching the Ghanaian language, but English should be used to teach the other subjects.” The RME tutor said:

To insist that all subjects be taught in L1 at the lower primary is not helpful. There is a sharp break after P3 and children are unable to accommodate the change. It affects their future performance negatively. Students are not very proficient in the L1. They tend to teach the language wrongly when forced to use it as MoI. There are no textbooks in L1 for lower primary. We are sacrificing academic excellence.

The majority of tutors agree that the principal supports the teaching, learning and use of the L1 as MoI by ensuring that the students enroll in a Ghanaian language and by bringing in part-time tutors from other institutions to teach the non-Akan languages (i.e., Ga, Dangme, and Ewe).

TTC Students

Researchers randomly selected and interviewed 44 teacher trainees from PS2 and PS3. This sample comprised 20 PS2 students and 24 PS3 students. Out of the 44 teacher trainees interviewed, 34 were Twi speakers, four Fante speakers, two Ewes, two Guans, one Ga and one Dangme. Forty-one of them did a Ghanaian language at the JSS level and 32 at the SS level. The only Ewe speaker who studied a Ghanaian language at the SS level studied Twi. The two Ewes studied Twi at the JSS level instead of their mother tongue – Ewe. One Twi speaker studied Ga at the JSS, one also studied Ewe at this level and yet another, Dangme. At the secondary school level it was noticed that one Twi speaker studied Ga and the Dangme speaker did Twi, whilst three Fante speakers did Twi.

At the college level, two teacher trainees study Ga, the rest study Twi as a subject. The impression is that there is no provision for the study of the other languages. One of them said: “The college does Twi but I study Ga privately.” This impression is contrary to what the tutors said. It is also important to note that though the college has a Fante tutor, none of the students interviewed indicated that s/he reads Fante.

All the teacher trainees interviewed are very much aware of the school language policy and can state it. This is not surprising at all, since it is a topic in the Ghanaian language syllabus for the TTC. The

majority of the teacher trainees (28 out of 44) have a positive attitude towards the policy. These are some of their reasons:

The Ghanaian language is our language, we should not undermine it.

The Ghanaian language helps learning. It promotes learning.

Because it is a sine qua non for teacher trainees.

Since it's children's L1 [they] tend to understand things better in that language.

It helps the children to know their language, to understand the lessons, and to have confidence in themselves.

It helps children. Twi is more familiar to the children. If there is an abrupt transition to English in lower primary, children would be discouraged and lose interest in school.

Sixteen out of the 44 teacher trainees oppose the school language policy. This is quite a significant number (36.2%). Some of these teacher trainees felt that English should be used as MoI from P1. Others suggested the Ghanaian language should be used as MoI only in P1 and that from then on the MoI should be English. The reasons they gave for their various stances were as varied as they were interesting.

It's our language. We shall by all means learn it at home.

If you are posted to a place where you do not understand the local language it becomes a problem to you.

When a child gets to P4 s/he encounters difficulties when English is being used for the first time. I think the L1 should be used as MoI in P1, but from P2 onwards English and the Ghanaian language should be used side by side. The policy also inhibits teacher and pupil mobility across language communities.

Children are able to learn better in English. The Ghanaian language is difficult for the children. It's better to get English early.

Later in the upper primary, children will find it difficult to pick [up] English when the Ghanaian Language is used at the lower level.

I dislike the idea that lessons should be prepared in the Ghanaian language.

Children pick [up] language very fast at this level so it will help them in the use of English.

English is MoI at most levels. It is also an international language. Twi is used only at the Regional level and not countrywide. English is spoken nation-wide. We should therefore use English as MoI from the earliest level.

The leaders tell us to use Ghanaian language as MoI but at durbars [community meetings] they themselves use English. Also some parents in some districts do not speak the language of the district in which they have been posted. The children therefore have language difficulties.

All 44 trainees interviewed suggested, however, that the Ghanaian language should be made compulsory at the SSS level to prepare students adequately for the TTC program.

LANGUAGE USE INSIDE AND OUTSIDE THE TTC CLASSROOM

With the exception of some of the Ghanaian Language lessons, all lessons observed at Erokosa TTC were delivered in English. The tutor for Social and Environmental Studies occasionally switched to Twi, but these were limited to only a few phrases and expressions. The lessons in the principles and methodology of Ghanaian language teaching were mostly done in English. The teacher trainees interacted among themselves in class in English; however, out of class they used the Ghanaian language. One Twi (Ghanaian language) tutor observed, “We normally use English but students speak the Ghanaian language on campus and use the Ghanaian language at morning devotions.”

AVAILABILITY OF TEXTBOOKS AND TEACHING MATERIALS

On the whole, the college had books for the teaching of the Ghanaian language as a subject. Books that were available for the use of both the tutors and the teacher trainees included novels, and pamphlets on cultural studies and phonology and grammar. Copies of the basic books were also available in the college library.

The college had been supplied books on Mathematics, Environmental Studies and reading and writing methodologies produced by GTZ. These books were all in the Twi language. At the time of the IEQ team’s visit the books had been packed in a corner of the college library. There was no indication that the books were in use. In fact, the teacher trainees did not have copies of their own.

Apart from the books that have been mentioned above, there are no learning materials for the Ghanaian language as a subject or as MoI. However, the Ghanaian language tutors help their students to develop materials for the teaching and learning of the Ghanaian language as a subject. These include rattles, festival scenes on cardboard flash cards, drawings, work cards, and real objects.

LESSONS AND MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION

As already indicated, all lessons at the TTC, except for some Ghanaian language lessons, were delivered in English. There were many activities going on at the time of the visit so only a few lessons could be observed. These included lessons in Mathematics, Science, Agricultural Science, Social/Environmental Studies, and Twi. Most of the lessons were revisions towards the students' impending exams conducted by the Institute of Education, University of Cape Coast.

The subject areas were different but the lessons followed more or less the same pattern. The lessons were teacher-centered. They began with a quick revision of the previous lesson or knowledge. They would then move on to the lesson for the day. The teacher announced the topic for the lesson; then s/he would ask a rhetorical question and begin to answer it himself/herself and then the lesson would roll on. The teachers, most of the time, dictated notes for the students to copy. The following lesson exemplifies the pattern:

A PS2 Social Studies Lesson

(Note: The topic was "Brainstorming.")

Teacher: Is it a teaching method or technique?

Class: Technique.

Teacher: What is brainstorming?

The teacher writes the question on the board and defines it for the students. He then dictates the definition for them to write in their notebooks. After that he lectures them for about twenty minutes. He then gives them a summary on the board for them to copy.

4 Stages of Brainstorming

- State the problem
- Exercise the brain (brainstorming itself) bringing out the ideas
- Review (cancel repetitions and irrelevant points)
- Tabulation (sequential order of ideas)

The team also had the opportunity to observe some of the teacher trainees do practice teaching in the college's demonstration school. The lessons were all taught in Twi. Unlike the lessons at the college, the lessons in the primary school were child-centered. There was very good use of questioning and demonstrations.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The pupils at Apala come from homes where English is not spoken. Apala is in a very good position to implement the school language policy. All the teachers speak the language of the area and have received some kind of training in the teaching of Twi as a subject. They are all confident that they will be able to use the Ghanaian language as MoI.

As noted above, the pupils at Apala come from four different linguistic groups but they all speak the language of the area – Twi. Our observations reveal that pupils are active, vocal, and participate highly in lessons when the teachers switch from English to Twi.

The teachers all claimed that they were aware of the school language policy. They all stated it correctly except the P2 teacher who thought the policy called for Ghanaian language to be used as MoI for all six years of primary school education. They all thought that they would need training in the use of the Ghanaian language if they were to implement the policy successfully. One teacher said, "The language policy will work if it is implemented."

However, the school has its own language policy – that English should be the language of instruction from P1. Not only that; the pupils are required to speak English only on the compound. The implications of this position are enormous. If this position is not checked, it means that any school or head teacher can "promulgate" a policy independently. The Ministry may wish to consider if it desires decentralization of education in the way it is currently going. As long as the pupils all over the country write the same final examinations (BECE) it seems that it would be more advantageous for the pupils to have some kind of uniformity in our practices.

Second, if the school continues with its current policy then there is a lot to do. There are not enough reading materials in English. A number of the pupils do not have the ability or confidence to use or speak English, as evidenced when the head teacher spoke English to some pupils outside the

classroom and the pupils responded in Twi. A reading center or a library at Apala could help to build pupils language skills and confidence, along with organized reading competitions and encouraging the pupils to use English outside the classroom.

There is also the need for the school to organize very frequent in-service trainings for the teachers on English language as a subject as well as on the use of English as MoI, as the language proficiency of some of the teachers is of concern. The teachers would benefit from training in the teaching of English as second language at the primary level.

Data collected from Erokosa Teacher Training College indicate that all the teacher trainees and the tutors are aware of the school language policy. The majority of tutors and teacher trainees have a positive attitude towards the policy. The tutors all teach in English, however, except the Ghanaian Language tutors who use the Ghanaian language. It is clear that the textbook situation is unsatisfactory.

If the teacher trainees are to receive the training that will equip them to implement the policy, then textbooks in Ghanaian languages should be produced. There is the need for training and re-training of the tutors in the TTC in the various Ghanaian languages and in how to teach in the Ghanaian language. They also need in-service training in the methodology of teaching their various subjects.

Chapter Two: Awocha School and Blessed Virgin Teacher Training College

BY

SAMUEL ASARE AMOAH

University College of Education at Winneba

AWOCHA PRIMARY SCHOOL

COMMUNITY PROFILE

Awocha is a small village located in Ghana's Western Region. The buildings are spread out on a small hill on a section of the dirt road that leads to a major port town. The village is about 25 kilometers west of the district capital. The settlement pattern of the Awocha village is the cluster type. The layout is rugged and undulating. The sea bounds the southern part of the village, while the north, east, and west are covered by a stretch of forest and cash crop farms. The inhabitants of the village are predominantly farmers even though they live along the coast. The main cash crops cultivated are cassava, sugar cane, and vegetables. Growing crops and garri processing are the most common economic activities. The community is peopled by about 400 native Ahantas, and the prevalent language used at the market, district, and village is Ahanta. The odikro (chief) of the area is a woman, an uncommon leadership arrangement.

SCHOOL PROFILE

The Awocha Primary School has two completed classroom blocks. The lower primary block, a completely new one put up by USAID, is made up of three classrooms and the head teacher's office. Close by the lower primary block is a block being put up by the people of Awocha themselves. The upper primary classroom block, which stands some distance away from the lower block, is old and almost dilapidated. The school compound is reasonably large but rugged and sloppy due to the mud and rains.

There are two bungalows, one for the headmaster and one for the teachers, built with USAID assistance. Each bungalow has a KVIP² toilet attached. The compound itself is bare. There are no recreational facilities such as seesaw slides, although there is a playground on which children run during break.

² Kumasi Very Improved Project

The school has 182 pupils, some of who commute from the two nearby villages two kilometers away. The prevalent languages spoken in the school are Ahanta, which is not a written language, and Fante. The four teachers teach combined classes. The head teacher is the only qualified and trained personnel in the school. The school participated in the early stages of the QUIPS project.

ATTITUDES AND PERCEPTIONS OF LANGUAGE POLICY AND LANGUAGE USE

Community

Among those interviewed were the chief, an opinion leader, a women's group organizer, and the P.T.A. chairman. All those interviewed are farmers and between 49 and 72 years old. Two of the parents had the Middle School Leaving Certificate (MSLC), another had stopped schooling at P2 and was not literate. Those interviewed have five to seven children per household, between four and seven school-going children.

Those interviewed were aware of the language policy. Two could say what the policy was and said they help with the provision of exercise books and other materials needed by the school. Another said he helps teachers to learn the local language. Two of the community members would prefer the local language (Ahanta) to be used at the lower primary level for medium of instruction (MoI), because their wards should be able to "read and write Ahanta." The other two would like English to be used as MoI in lower primary and upper primary.

All the community members said they have been giving assistance to the teachers by helping them weed their farms during the farming season. The women's group organizer assists the school by donating footballs and jerseys. The community involves the school in all its cultural activities through plays, drumming, dancing, and singing the "Kuntun," a folk song. The women's group leader has also donated drums to the school to be used during cultural activities. The community members and some of the pupils also help teachers having problems learning the local language.

The role of community members in helping to select the language of instruction at the school surfaced in Awocha. Three of them said they help teachers to decide on what language of instruction to use in the school:

I suggest to the teacher about the need to know the mother tongue.

I approach the teachers to try to use Ahanta since Fante is imposed on us.

I assist by donating textbooks as my personal contribution.

Parents

Equal numbers of mothers and fathers were interviewed at Awocha during the first round of data collection. Fifteen were parents; one was a guardian. Thirteen of them are farmers, one is a fisherman, and one a trader. Only six can read and write. Most said Ahanta was their first language, only two said Fante is their first language. There were one to seven children in each household and their ages range from one to nine years old.

Most of the parents want their children to be taught in English in school since they think that English is the language that will make their children be able to live comfortably in this world. One parent made this point--and also noted the significant connection between knowing English and taking examinations

I want my child to be taught with English because I want him to be able to communicate with outsiders, and, again, all examinations that I have seen my child take are all written in English.

Others thought that by learning English their children would be able to travel outside the country to seek better jobs and to read and assist them in English. One parent favored his/her child using English because it is the official language. Some parents also felt that learning English will enhance their children's chances for better learning and for them to be fluent in the language.

Even though most parents want their children to be taught in English, some also believe that their wards should be taught in the Ghanaian language—Ahanta. They feel that would let their children have better understanding of some of the basic concepts in learning. One parent said,

The use of Ghanaian language (Ahanta) will enable my child to quickly understand what she is told and also for the stability of our culture. I favor Ahanta.

Another parent also wants Ahanta to be developed and be used well. He said,

I want to...so as to develop the Ahanta language and also be able to come out with the printing of textbooks early enough to enable the pupils to learn and to know of the language better and to be able to use it well.

One parent was undecided about which language should be used as MoI in school for his/her wards.

Parents' high interest in pupils learning and becoming literate in the local language is noteworthy: they are eager for their children to become literate in their own language--a language that is not officially

recognized by the government, and for which there are no materials available. Due to the Ahantas historical relationship with the Fante, parents stated that they would prefer their children learn and learn in Ahanta, but, barring that, English was preferable to Fante. However, when a Ghanaian language is used in school, it is Fante.

During the parents' focus group interview in the second set of data collection, when asked about the school language policy most stated that the policy existed because the government felt that the people's culture should be maintained since everyone's language and culture were important. Others believed that the use of the local language during early school years would help the children grasp certain concepts that are difficult to explain and also be able to explain new things taught at school to parents. One parent remarked that with the coming in of personnel from the Improving Learning through Partnership (ILP) USAID project and the provision of teaching and learning materials to teachers, they had observed an improvement in the performance of their wards in terms of speaking English; so, if the policy should work, teachers would need to be supplied with adequate and relevant teaching and learning materials.

Some parents believed that if one cannot read and write a particular language then it means that one does not 'know' the language. One parent thought it was good to be able to read and write English because "if you visit a supermarket and the prices of the items are written on the articles you should be able to read and know exactly how much the articles cost." Another parent said, "if you are new to an area and signs such as "keep off," "danger," and "do not trespass" are displayed, you should be able to read and understand what it means to ensure your safety."

One member of the group believed strongly that, even though the policy was good, English should be used in the area until their local language Ahanta was developed, since to be able to read and write English would take someone to places outside their area. She went on to say that quite recently a friend of hers lost her marriage simply because she had not been to school and could not read and write because the husband wanted someone who could read and write to help him with his business.

During the focus group interview, some of the parents who earlier had felt that English should be the MoI now stated that Ghanaian language should be used as MoI but felt that teaching and learning materials and books needed to be supplied to help the teachers improve and be able to implement the policy. Parents thought that authorities also needed to visit the schools to make sure that the policy is well implemented, keeping in mind the benefits pupils will derive from the policy. Also, they thought efforts should be made to develop the Ahanta language as early as possible.

In individual interviews during the second data collection, parents said they always heard teachers teach using English and they felt that teachers were not adequately trained to use Ghanaian language to teach. One parent felt that teachers should be given frequent in-service training to improve their

competence in the use of the Ghanaian language for instruction. Another remarked, “the language that is used right from the nursery level-preschool level should be the language that should be used to teach pupils at the early stages of the basic school level.” All the parents interviewed ranked Mathematics, Science and English as “very important” followed by Religious and Moral Education as “important” and Environmental Studies, Music and Dance as “good” subjects.

Teachers

The head teacher is a 51-year old man from the Western Region who speaks and writes Fante and English. He supervises three teachers and teaches P1. He speaks Fante most of the time when teaching and says he prefers this because “Fante is one of the 11 languages recognized by the G.E.S. (Ghana Education Service).” Occasionally he teaches in English. He is aware of the government language policy in education, although he says “it is not very clear about what it says--but I think it’s about using Ghanaian language in lower primary and using English in upper primary as medium of instruction.” He also thinks “it is a very good policy and should be pursued.” He added that he “would effect no change except to insist on emphasizing the use of Ghanaian language in the lower primary.” He says he has been doing everything possible to see to the policy’s implementation, but “for proper implementation,” he said, “teachers must be given in-service training on the implementation of the policy.”

The P2 teacher speaks and teaches in Ahanta, Fante, and English and can read Fante and English. He is a 26-year-old man from the Western Region, a student at the Seventh Day Adventist Teacher Training College (where he is studying Twi) on attachment (i.e., assigned) to this school. He stood in for the P2 teacher who was sick during this data collection period. He was not aware of the government language policy but he felt that English and the Ghanaian language should be used as MoI interchangeably as the situation demands.

The P3 teacher was 21 years old, an untrained SSS graduate. Ahanta is his first language; he also speaks Fante and English and can read both languages. He claimed that he was aware of the government language policy but incorrectly stated it as “both English and Ghanaian language should be used at the lower primary as medium of instruction.”

The P4 teacher from the Central Region is a 24 year-old untrained teacher who speaks Fante and English well and has been in the school for two years. His first language is Fante and he uses it well as MoI. He was aware of the government language policy and says, “the policy is a good one.”

During the second data collection, in focus group interviews teachers expressed various views about the policy. One argued that the government wants everyone to understand what is being taught and that is why the Ghanaian language should be used to teach in the first three years of basic education. Another claimed that “children’s mental faculties are not sufficiently developed to absorb the number

of new vocabulary in other subjects in any language apart from the local language” and so there was the need to use the prevalent local language to teach them.

On the issue of language policy being applied to the school, two teachers believed that the GES had directed that the Ghanaian language should be used but that the ILP intervention in the school encouraged the use of English since it sought to improve students' learning.

Generally all the teachers believed that the policy was good and would benefit the pupils and the society as a whole, but one of the teachers said, “since the Ghanaian language teachers were few, the language should be used to teach side by side with English until competent and adequate teachers are trained to use it to teach.” One teacher also remarked that, though the policy was good on the ground, teachers are not implementing it, and, if Ghanaians are not careful, English will override the Ghanaian languages. This teacher argued that serious effort should be made to implement the policy through the organization of in-service training for teachers. Another teacher believed that the use of Ghanaian language as MoI would promote learning in the second subject. The teachers also noted that pupils preferred to be taught using the Ghanaian language for better understanding. (The pupils said that they had “enough English” to learn in it as MoI, but they also believed that both English and Ghanaian language should be used for instruction through P4, until they got to P5.) All the teachers strongly agreed that they were not adequately trained to use the Ghanaian language as MoI.

Almost all teachers ranked Mathematics, English, and Science as the most important subjects, whilst Environmental Studies, Ghanaian Language and Culture, and Music and Dance followed in terms of importance. They also believed that all the subjects, even though some are more important to others, should be considered equally when the timetable is being prepared.

The P2 teacher said “I organize extra classes for the very important subjects to help pupils develop understanding and liking for those subjects since to pursue higher education these subjects serve as core subjects while other subjects revolve around them.”

The P1 teacher remarked

...the GES authorities should try hard and post teachers to areas where they can function effectively in terms of the Ghanaian language learnt at school so as to be able to help with the implementation of language policy.

Pupils

Out of the 16 pupils interviewed and observed, eight were girls and six were boys, ages seven to 15. All speak Ahanta and Fante. The pupils said if the local language is used as MoI they understand better whatever is taught. They also felt they could interact well with their teachers if the local language was

used. Five pupils preferred to use English during interactions with the teacher whether in class or outside. One said, “I like English but I am not very good and so I use Fante to communicate with others.” Others said they liked English because it is the official language. Most pupils said their topics of conversation during break are entertainment, personal issues, and whatever took place in the classroom during lessons. All except two used the local language for interaction; these two were undecided as to which language they used for interaction.

Supervisors

The Circuit Supervisor has been a circuit officer for eight years, five years in the present circuit and three with Awocha Primary School. His first language is Asante Twi, but he also speaks Fante Ahanta, Nzema, and English. He can write Fanti, Asante Twi, and English and he is capable of teaching Fante and Asante Twi. He supervises 140 teachers in 18 primary and Junior Secondary Schools.

He is aware of the language policy and thinks the policy is “okay except that it is not applied well.” If he had the opportunity to effect any changes he would “encourage the teaching of the English language and insist on the use of the Ghanaian language.”

He said Ahanta and Fante are used in the area but the former is used most in the classroom. With the implementation of the language policy he said he “helps interpret certain words to teachers.” He believes that “in-service training should be organized frequently to update teachers’ knowledge on teaching.” For teachers who do not use the local language to teach, he has been encouraging them to use it as MoI where it supposed to be used.

The Assistant Director (AD) of Education in charge of Supervision has been in the district for 25 years. He was a Circuit Supervisor for 10 years and then became the AD. He speaks Nzema as a first language but speaks English and Akuapem Twi as well, and writes in Nzema and English. He is capable of teaching Nzema and Fante as Ghanaian languages. The AD supervises roughly 52 schools and 108 teachers. He accurately recited the government language policy on education to show that he was aware of its existence and said it “should be pursued” because “children should be competent in their own language for literacy and oral skills.” He would not make any changes in the policy but would ask specialists in the district and Ghanaian language organizers to mobilize equipment, textbooks, and other materials to intensify the teaching of Ghanaian languages in schools to solve non-implementation problems.

Regarding his contribution to implementing the language policy he said he “organizes teachers in the area for those who can teach and speak the local language to exchange classes with those who cannot, to help them teach the subject.” Again he draws teachers’ attention to the policy if the teacher concerned is not doing the right thing.

He said he sees pupils interacting well when they communicate in the local language, due to their understanding of whatever they talk about when the local language was used. He said that when the local language was used in the classroom, especially during the Ghanaian language class, interaction was at its peak but the situation is different when English was used. He believes the use of the local language is linked with parents' attitudes towards the language since the language is used all over the house.

The AD thinks in-service training should be organized frequently for teachers to learn more about Ghanaian language teaching methodology and about how to improvise materials to help them in their teaching.

LANGUAGE USE INSIDE AND OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM

The P1 teacher said pupils were happy and understand and could contribute in class when the local language is used as MoI, but when English was used the class became quiet. He said pupils' interaction was high when local language was used. Pupils mostly used Ahanta and responded to questions in this language. During lessons when the teacher was around, the MoI was mainly English (80%) with some Ahanta (20%) and sometimes Fante. The teacher involved all pupils in discussion on whatever topics he chose. Pupils always answered questions from the teacher in Ahanta and Fante because they had difficulty responding in English.

In P2 pupils used Ahanta throughout when the teacher was not present in the classroom. After about 20 minutes of discussion in a Mathematics lesson, the teacher gave the pupils class exercises to do for the rest of the period. All the questions in the exercise were in English.

Ten of the 16 P1 through P4 pupils interviewed said that Fante is used as MoI while three said Ahanta/Fante or only Ahanta is used. This confirms what the teachers said about the language used as MoI. Ahanta is the first language for 15 pupils whilst one said Fante was his first language. Fourteen speak Ahanta in the house and two use both Ahanta and Fante. Most pupils said that they are able to communicate, understand, and feel comfortable with the use of the local language and, because of that, they use it everywhere they go.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

In the P1 class, the 31 girls and 21 boys sit at tables and chairs in a circle. The teacher uses Fante as MoI for demonstration and discussion approach lessons in Mathematics, English and Ghanaian Language. Occasionally the teacher uses Ahanta and English and he gives all assignments and homework in English. During break the teacher normally walks straight to his nearby bungalow and on his way home he speaks with pupils in Ahanta.

Researchers observed three lessons (English, Ghanaian Language, and Mathematics) in this class. On the first day researchers visited the class, the teacher was not around but the children sat in circles and took textbooks and read on their own. Some pupils flipped through their books and some walked around looking at the few wall charts. Pupils used Ahanta throughout. When the bell rang for the next lesson, they changed the books they were using. On another day when the teacher was present, after about 20 minutes of discussion in a Mathematics lesson, the teacher gave the pupils class exercises to do for the rest of the period. All the questions in the class exercise were in English.

In the P3 classroom boys and girls were seated together in groups. The teacher understood Ahanta but used Fante for many of his lessons. He used English most of the time in teaching Mathematics but changed to Fante occasionally. He said, “It is very difficult to teach Maths in Fante.” In the classroom the children spoke Ahanta most of the time and responded to questions in Ahanta. The teacher mostly used the teacher-centered approach since materials were inadequate. In one lesson just before break, the teacher asked the pupils in English whether they were hungry. There was no response until he used Ahanta to ask the question. Then they all responded in chorus and started running out of the classroom.

At break a majority of the pupils rushed to their houses. No food is sold around the compound so, as one parent said, “they come to find something to eat.” Due to the rains and the sloppy nature of the land, however, children from the other villages stayed around during break at 10:15 a.m. and 12:00 noon and clustered around the classroom block. Their conversations were in Ahanta.

In compliance with the language policy, the P4 MoI was English. Occasionally the teacher used Fante; however, whenever he used English there was always silence in the classroom. The moment he used Fante the responses were overwhelming and all pupils participated in the lesson. The pupils also communicated in Ahanta and Fante during classes and break.

The teacher gave exercises in class and went round marking and occasionally prompting pupils about some mistakes he had seen. The teacher used other materials when he taught, that is, supplementary readers. The teacher assigned exercises and homework in English.

All the teachers talked about students sharing some textbooks since they were not enough to go round. Their pupils were very happy and enjoyed using textbooks especially those with pictures in them.

P4 pupils understood whatever they were taught in the local language, and because they understood it well and were interested, they could ask questions and also contribute to the lesson. During English lessons pupils sat idle and some even responded to questions using the local language, which the teacher then translated into English. Teachers used the question and answer, discussion, and the demonstration methods for teaching.

Apart from the English Language lessons (where the teachers use very little English for teaching) in all four classes, the local language was used in teaching all lessons—even in P4, where the MoI was supposed to be English.

Even though only one teacher has had training in the use of local language to teach, all claimed to be competent in the use of the local language for instruction. The one who has had the training felt that more in-service training should be organized for teachers to update their knowledge in the use of the local language to teach. He stated, “I have been able to learn things I did not know formerly.”

In all the lessons observed, teachers primarily used the question and answer method and English MoI with occasional use of Ahanta and Fante. Information gathered suggested that they had resorted to the use of English because of the ILP intervention program in the area. Some teachers reported that the ILP program insisted on the use English as medium of instruction, although QUIPS program advisors felt the schools were making these choices on their own.

In a P1 Environmental Studies lesson about food and its uses, the teacher used Ahanta and Fante for the lesson with occasional English. He divided this lesson into four parts; first, names of food with which pupils were familiar. He wrote names of these foods on the chalkboard, such as fufu, rice, plantain, cassava and yam. The next segment of the lesson was about how a particular food was prepared and made ready for consumption. That is, the processes whereby the parts of a particular food are planted, harvested, and prepared for consumption. The final part was a summary of the lesson. Here pupils summarized the lesson in their own language and how they understood the lesson. A particular pupil used a familiar song to summarize the whole process. The song was

‘Kokonte (food prepared from cassava) where do you come from,

I come from bankye (cassava) ase (roots).....’

At the end of the lesson the teacher wrote certain types of food on the chalkboard in Fante and asked pupils to find the English names for such foods. The foods were omo (rice), brodze (plantain), and bayere (yam).

MATERIALS

There are no textbooks in Environmental Studies or in Religious and Moral Education for P1 through P4. In P1 the ratio of pupils to textbooks in Ghanaian language is 1:4, and about 1:2 in English and Mathematics. (As with other sites, the Ghanaian language book is a supplementary reader and not a textbook.) Hence, pupils shared textbooks in pairs because of the few copies available in all the subjects. The P1 teacher said they do not have any other materials for teaching the local language, which makes the teaching of the local language difficult since even teachers’ handbooks are not

available. The teacher added that it was because of the lack of these materials that some teachers “refuse to teach the Ghanaian Language subject (i.e., Fante).” This teacher frequently uses charts when teaching. P2 information on materials was not available to us.

Only ten pupils out of 37 in P3 had access to textbooks. There were no wall charts and the classroom had only a clock hanging on the wall. The teacher sometimes used local objects like trees around the school as examples in his lessons. The P4 class had a 1:1 ratio for English and Integrated Science textbooks--and just three Mathematics books for all 17 students to share.

Pupils’ responses on materials indicate that apart from the prescribed textbooks their teachers use few flash cards and teaching aids. During classes they share the books with other pupils and occasionally they are made to read aloud, especially in English. They are also given exercises in books.

SHARING RESEARCH FINDINGS WITH THE COMMUNITY

The meeting originally scheduled to disseminate the research findings at Awocha did not come on as a result of a heavy downpour of rains. It was therefore rescheduled to the following day. That day, prominent people in the three towns serving the Awocha School trooped to the meeting place. After the initial introduction of the researchers, the summary of the findings was distributed. Those present were allowed some time to read through the summary.

When the meeting began, a gentleman from Accra, who had not been part of the focus group and did not understand what the policy seeks to do, protested vehemently against the policy. He claimed that the policy should not be implemented in their village since it will not serve their interest in education. After researchers explained to him why they were there and what they had found out, he came to accept the findings as presented.

One important issue that surfaced was Fante being imposed on the community (since it was not the prevalent local language of the area), and the need for the prevalent language, Ahanta, to be developed and used as MoI in their schools. They wanted their mother tongue language to be developed as soon as possible, otherwise they did not see how the policy would work in their area for their benefit.

The meeting was so successful that most of those present went home satisfied that if the policy were well implemented Ghana would move faster and stronger in her educational pursuit and development.

BLESSED VIRGIN TEACHER TRAINING COLLEGE

Blessed Virgin Teachers Training College is a Roman Catholic college for women located in Ghana's Western Region. Students come from all over the country, but most of them are from the Western and Central Region. The majority of them speak Fante.

Three different Ghanaian languages are offered in the school: Twi, Fante and Nzema (Nzema was introduced only about four years prior to the time of data collection). Each student is expected to at least study one language during her course of study.

ATTITUDES AND PERCEPTIONS OF LANGUAGE POLICY AND USE IN SCHOOLS

Administrators

The principal is a Fante woman who is from the Central Region of Ghana; she speaks Ga besides Fante. She has been teaching for the past 26 years in Basic Science, her area of specialization. She is aware of the language policy and believes that Ghanaian language can be used at the lower level of primary but feels that more English and less Ghanaian language should be used in the upper classes for smooth transition to the upper primary where English becomes the MoI. She also believes that "teachers must be sufficiently proficient in Ghanaian language and English for the implementation to be successful."

The vice principal hails from the Asanti Region and speaks Twi and Fante. She was aware of the language policy and feels that it is good because a child should be proficient in the mother tongue before learning any other language. She stated, "in my methodology lessons, I advise students to use Ghanaian language for teaching in the lower primary." With regard to how she helps with the implementation of the language policy, she says, "I always try to translate words that are not familiar to the students into the appropriate Ghanaian language for better understanding." She is one of the education tutors of the school and has not read much on literature on bilingual education.

Tutors

Researchers interviewed all the heads of department for all the courses offered in the school—Cultural Studies, Science, Mathematics, English, and Ghanaian Language. Out of the 10 tutors interviewed, six spoke and were literate in Fante, three in Twi, and one in Nzema. They had acquired this language proficiency either because it was their mother tongue or they had acquired the language during schooling. All the teachers had taught more than five years at the TTC and their experience ranged from five to 20 years in teaching.

All the tutors agreed that they enjoy teaching in the Ghanaian language since it enhances TTC students' understanding. All were aware of the language policy for schools. One of the eight who liked the language policy remarked,

The language policy is good because it would make our people become aware of their language and culture and also bring us together as one people.

Two tutors did not like the policy. They stated,

It deprives pupils in government schools from learning the English language at an early stage."

I think L1 should be used to teach Ghanaian language whilst the remaining subjects are taught in English.

Six tutors believe that some aspects of subjects learnt at the TTC should be taught in a Ghanaian language to encourage the students to use Ghanaian language. This should be done gradually by using both English and Ghanaian language until the greater part of the lesson is done in the Ghanaian language. One other teacher suggested that "the first two years of the teacher training program should be content-based and the third year be made pedagogical with emphases on the use of Ghanaian language so as to enable teacher trainees to have mastery over the use of Ghanaian language as medium of instruction." He added, "after school, intensive workshops should be organized and relevant and adequate teaching learning materials should also be supplied to help with the implementation."

The teachers believed that strict and frequent supervision, teachers posted to the right language area, and the provision of right and appropriate teaching learning materials can help with effective implementation of the language policy.

TTC Students

Nine out of the 16 students interviewed (eight from PS2 and eight from PS3) were Fantes, one was Twi, one Dagbani, one Bissa, one Nzema, one Ewe, one Konkomba, one Sefwi, and one Wassa. Three students could speak three Ghanaian languages (one speaks Fanti, Twi, Nzema; one speaks Twi, Ga, Ewe; and the third speaks Twi, Ga, and Bissa). A fourth student speaks Twi and Fante and the other 12 speak one of the following languages: Konkomba, Hausa, Sefwi and Wassa.

Apart from those who were studying Fante at the college--the Ghanaian language offered at their former schools before entering the training college--the rest of the students had studied Ghanaian languages that were different from those offered at the college at either the Junior Secondary Schools

(JSS) or Senior Secondary Schools (SSS) or when they took the 'O' level or 'A' level examinations in their previous schools.

All students remarked that they enjoyed their lessons best if they were taught in Ghanaian language. Some of the students said that they prefer that Ghanaian Language is learnt at the basic level as a subject and it should be made compulsory at the SSS level as well as at the training college level. They believe that such a move will help trainees acquire the requisite skills to help with the implementation of the policy.

The few textbooks at the TTC were supplemented with books that the students themselves bought. Word letter cards, flash cards, and flannel graphs were among the teaching learning materials students prepared with the help of their tutors. Students were also given some materials to replicate so as to help them teach Ghanaian language at the basic level.

All students were aware of the language policy but felt that both English and Ghanaian language should be used concurrently for proper understanding and acquisition of English. On the choice of MoI, the students believe that Ghanaian language at the lower primary was better for understanding and English was also good to be used at the upper primary level.

LANGUAGE USE INSIDE AND OUTSIDE THE TTC CLASSROOM

All the TTC lessons researchers observed were taught in English, except lessons in Ghanaian Language and peer teaching on how to teach in the lower primary. In the peer teaching itself most of the words were written and pronounced in English (e.g., pencil, book, etc.). The media of interaction between students both and out of class were English and Ghanaian language, but only English when tutors were around.

As stated above, some tutors believed that the use of Ghanaian language for instruction in the TTC greatly affected TTC students' proficiency in the use of English. Due to this, the principal had instituted various punishments if students used Ghanaian language as a medium of interaction among themselves and with their tutors. Some tutors said that during on-campus teaching practice students are encouraged to use Ghanaian language as MoI, but others said that the principal and vice principal have asked students to use both English and Ghanaian language as MoI.

Looking at the contradictory nature of the responses given by the tutors, it could be deduced that they actually liked the language policy as it was implemented on the TTC campus but felt that certain aspects need to be reviewed. As one tutor said,

Sincerely, during school functions students are punished when they are heard interacting and speaking Ghanaian language on campus, because the school

authorities believe Ghanaian language usage has influence their English proficiency and so generally they (tutors) are all against the use of Ghanaian language on campus.

AVAILABILITY OF TEXTBOOKS AND TEACHING MATERIALS

Apart from books from the project undertaken by the German donor GTZ in translating some English language textbooks into other Ghanaian languages, a few other supplementary materials supplied by the teachers were used in the school. Most of the teachers complained about the lack of adequate supplies of books in the schools, especially in Mathematics, Science, and Environmental Studies. Some of the available materials were Ata ne Ata, teachers guides, flash cards, and syllabi—all in English—and Ma ya bin, Yehiahyia oo in Nzema.

Only one tutor had ever read any literature on bilingual education. He had read the research on language of instruction by the World Bank that indicated that the use of mother as MoI helps students perform better than those who learn through the use of a second language.

LESSONS AND MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION

All the lessons observed were taught in English. The exception was the Ghanaian language, where Ghanaian language usage was interspersed with some English. Some of the lessons observed are described below.

The Mathematics lesson was labeled a ‘practice lesson,’ since the week the researchers were there was the revision week that tutors were preparing students for end-of-year examinations. The lesson was a problem-solving lesson that the tutor wrote on the chalkboard. The question was:

PQR are points on the circle with center O and diameter 14cm. Angle PQR=35°. Find correct to one decimal place (i) the length of the minor arc (ii) The length of the chord PQ(? =3.143).

The tutor used the question-and-answer method to teach and used English throughout the lesson. He probed students’ answers and gave good rewards as students answered questions. Occasionally the tutor would ask a student to explain unclear statements students made to the other students. Some students gave alternative solutions to the problem.

The Ghanaian Language lesson observed was a peer teaching class and the topic was punctuation (Agyinahyedee a ew? atwere nu-Twi). The student teacher demonstrated to his peers how to teach punctuation in Twi to P2. He gave as examples: nsanho (comma), osiawiee (full stop), and mmusae? (question mark).

The other students were asked to use the following words to form sentences: nwoma (book), kwadu (banana), also pen and pencil. One student got up and responded by saying; 'me bage a mede bae sukuu no, nwoma, pen, pencil ne kwadu w? mu. (The bag I brought to school contains books, pen, pencil, and banana.)

This was followed by other sentences to illustrate the use of punctuation:

Wo din de sen? (What is your name?—the question mark) and

Met?? paano, asikyire ne nkate? (I bought bread, sugar and groundnut.—the comma)

Another lesson on listening comprehension was “Akan kan me hw?,” the story of a man with his two children and a cat called Blackie. The peer teacher read the text in English and students responded by asking questions in English. Although this was a Ghanaian Language class, all the writings on the topic on the chalkboard were in English.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Data collected in the TTC revealed that students, tutors and principals were all aware of the language policy. Some of the tutors have positive attitude towards the policy whilst a few of them had negative attitudes. There were not enough teaching and learning materials, including textbooks and books written in Ghanaian language. All of this has implications for preparing TTC students to implement the language policy in primary school.

With regard to the primary school, when the language policy calls for the predominant Ghanaian language of the area to be used as MoI in P1 through P3, the approximately 60 language groups of Ghana are reduced to the ten or eleven “officially sponsored” languages, that is, those that have an orthography and are recognized for use in schools. This is problematic in communities such as Awocha, where families are eager for children to maintain the home language that is not an officially recognized language. The school implements the language policy through the use of Fante, but this does not resolve the dilemma for maintaining Ghanaian language and cultural traditions among the Ahanta people--or for many other people in Ghana who do not speak one of the official languages.

The relationship between school language and school examinations was raised by the Awocha parent who astutely noted, “all examinations that I have seen my child take are all written in English.” This parent preferred the use of language, in part, for this very reason. When the language policy advocates the use of Ghanaian languages but English is the language of the informal and formal examination system at all levels, the importance the educational system assigns to English over Ghanaian languages is clear. If the school language policy is to be fully implemented, then subject matter examinations must also be written in languages other than English.

Parents report a high level of community involvement with the school, including having a role in selecting the MoI for the school. One community member also reported helping teachers learn Ahanta, the Ghanaian language of the area. Community support for the school is admirable and it appears that lessons for healthy school-community relations here could well be taken to other communities. Community members' role in helping to select the MoI for the school also raises the question of who chooses--and who should choose--the language of instruction for a school in a given community.

"Over-implementation" is a popular derogatory term used to describe the practice of using Ghanaian language in the classroom after P3. Awocha could be described as one of these sites--but it could also be described as a school that tries to do what is best for children who, as a group, have not reached the policy's expectation of fluency at the end of P3. In P4, in compliance with the language policy, the MoI was English. However, when the P4 teacher used English he observed that routinely there was silence in the classroom. The moment he used Fante the responses were overwhelming and all pupils participated in the lessons. This raises questions about the kind and quality of instruction to which children have been exposed, but it also challenges the soundness of the policy in declaring P4 as the magical year when all pupils will be equally ready to participate fully in schooling in English. Research being conducted internationally on the appropriate year of transition suggests that P4 may be one year too early to expect children to have acquired the necessary academic vocabulary needed to participate fully in school.

Those in charge of supervision over the Awocha School are solidly behind the school language policy. The AD for this area supports the school language policy, wishes for more resources and textbooks in Ghanaian language to implement the policy, and would like to organize more in-service to help teachers in this area, because he believes that "children should be competent in their own language for literacy and oral skills." He would like to "employ specialists in the district and Ghanaian language organizers to mobilize equipment, textbooks and other materials to intensify the teaching of Ghanaian languages in schools to solve non-implementation problems." The Circuit Supervisor thinks the language policy is good "except that it is not applied well." If he had the opportunity to effect any changes he would encourage the teaching of the English language and insist on the use of the Ghanaian language. The head teacher at Awocha also thinks "it is a very good [language] policy and should be pursued." Given the lukewarm support and outright opposition of supervisors in other districts to the language policy, actual implementation of the language policy could be tried in the future at Awocha (and in other schools) under the supervision of these individuals. This could be the supportive environment needed to see how the language policy truly works, when implemented as envisioned.

Chapter Three: Kapa School and Wosec Teacher Training College

BY

PETER A. K. AMISSAH

University College of Education at Winneba

COMMUNITY PROFILE

The Kapa School community is located in a major urban area in the Ashanti Region of Ghana. It comprises a university and its neighboring suburb. The estimated population of the community that the university serves is about 18,000. Teaching and related educational service jobs are the main occupations of the people of the community. The prevalent Ghanaian language is Akan but English is understood and widely used by members of the community.

The physical layout of the community consists of residence halls for university students, faculty buildings, guesthouses, and laboratories, as well as lecturers' bungalows, all of which are artistically arranged.

SCHOOL PROFILE

The school is private and is managed by the university. It is located on the northern side of the university near the highway. Roads leading to the school from the town and the university are asphalted. The school has 875 boys and 848 girls, 48 teachers, and a head teacher who does not teach but sees to the day-to-day administration of the school and the supervision of the teachers.

The school has a large compound dotted by different types of shade trees and flowers with beautiful buildings linked to each other by concrete lanes. The buildings are regularly maintained. The school has many resources, as evidenced by the abundant materials available to teachers and pupils, what pupils' were wearing, and the book bags they carried.

Kapa School is a multilingual school. Pupils come from different ethnic and language backgrounds. The pupils interviewed report that they speak Twi, English (two speak only English), and Hausa. The language of communication and instruction is English.

ATTITUDES AND PERCEPTIONS OF LANGUAGE POLICY AND LANGUAGE USE

Community

Researchers interviewed three community members: the PTA chairman, two lecturers from the university, the School Management Committee (SMC) chairman, and an opinion leader--a nurse. All three were for the use of English as the medium of instruction (MoI) throughout the primary school. The Parent Teacher Association (PTA) chairman and the opinion leader did not offer any explanation for their choice. The SMC chairman stated that English should be used “with a chunk of Twi” and added,

the idea of local language as a medium of instruction in this school is impossible because firstly teachers and pupils come from different ethnic backgrounds and secondly the school wants to intensify the use of English to enable pupils to perform well in their school subjects to enable them earn higher qualifications.

Parents

Researchers interviewed 13 parents; three parents of the 16 pupils selected for observation were not available for interview. Of those interviewed, one was a nurse, two were traders, six were teachers, one was a student, two were businessmen, and one was a property valuation officer. Apart from two parents who had one and two children respectively, there were three to six children in the other households.

Six parents speak English and Twi, five speak only Twi at home, one speaks only English at home, and one speaks Hausa, English and Twi at home. All the parents interviewed were literate in English. Seven parents were also literate in Twi, and one in German.

All the parents thought that English should be used as MoI throughout primary school. Five parents thought that competency in English would take their children places, while one was confident that if a child were fluent in English she/he would not encounter problems in life. Another parent thought English would help a child get a good job. Others were of the opinion that English enhances learning and would make their children learn faster and better. Two of the parents wanted their children to learn English so that they “could speak the official language of the nation.” Only three parents thought that learning both English and Ghanaian language is necessary for a well-rounded education.

The focus group discussion with parents during the second data collection period revealed a slight shift from the earlier preference for an English-only MoI to a position of preference for bilingualism. Most parents were in favor of the use of English and Twi side by side for instruction but suggested that English should have a slight edge over Ghanaian language in the ratios of 60:40 and 80:20 respectively. They said

The two languages must go hand in hand but should tilt in favor of English in the ratio of 70:30.

If you insist on using the English language the child may understand but cannot speak it. All the same, the Ghanaian language should go hand in hand with English. In this way the students understand easily.

This parent suggested a ratio of 40:60 for English and Ghanaian language respectively and emphasized that “fluency and literacy in the Ghanaian language serve not only to help children assert themselves, it enables them also to maintain their identity.”

Some parents, however, insisted on the use of English as MoI right from P1. One stated, “I accept English as the medium of instruction right from P1 but in a subject like Environmental Studies teachers have the liberty to employ the Ghanaian language.”

A few parents explained their preference for the use of English at an early stage by comparing the performance of children exposed to English earlier and those who learnt in the Ghanaian language:

Children who had exposure to English from the initial stages do perform better than those who did not get such exposure, for examiners' reports indicate that those who fail the examinations do not understand English, as the exams are set and answered in English.

They were all happy, however, that “attempts are being made for instruction to be bilingual.”

Generally the discussion indicated that even though parents expressed diverse opinions, the consensus finally seemed to rest on the preference for the use of the two languages, English and Twi, side by side.

During individual interviews on the second occasion, most parents agreed that even though the Ghanaian language is important for understanding in the classroom the English language should be used as MoI to enable pupils to grasp the essential elements early, and to enable them to pass the exams well in order to obtain qualifications for higher education and better jobs. The parents unanimously agreed that it is good to start pupils with English as MoI right from P1 or even at the pre-school level to make them fluent both in speaking and writing it. One parent insisted that pupils should have enough English to be able to pass their BECE very well. They suggested, however, that if teachers were to use the Ghanaian language as MoI then they should be given adequate training in it.

Most of the parents ranked English, Mathematics and Science as the most important subjects and regarded Environmental Studies, and Religious and Moral Education as important, and then Ghanaian Language, and Music and Dance as good subjects in that order.

Teachers

The P1 teacher has the Teacher's Three-Year Post-Secondary 'A' and the G.C.E. 'O' level certificates. She studied Ghanaian language to the level of MLSC. She learnt to speak Ga at home and received no training in college in using Ghanaian language as MoI or in learning to teach Ghanaian language to primary school pupils. She can also speak English and Twi, and can read English and Twi but can write only in English. She uses English as MoI. The teacher is aware of the government's language policy and can state it accurately but thinks that it should be reviewed because English and Ghanaian language should be taught side by side. On the other hand, she says that if she had the opportunity she would effect changes in the policy by asking the government to train more Ghanaian language teachers. "My husband has instructed me to speak Ghanaian language to children in the home," she added.

The P2 teacher has 25 years experience in lower primary and possesses the Four-Year Teacher's Certificate 'A.' Twi is her first language but she speaks and writes English as well. She studied Twi at TTC for six terms, including methods of using Twi and teaching Twi as a subject, specifically to primary school pupils. She reported that she did not enjoy sitting in the Ghanaian language classes, however, because she wanted to study other things than her own language, which she understood. The P2 teacher is aware of the existence of the language policy and can state it accurately without mistakes. When asked what she thinks of it she said, "the idea is good but we do not do it that way because we want children to pick [up] English as quickly as possible." Asked about changes she would want to make in the policy she says, "English as a second language should be used to teach all subjects while Ghanaian language is used only when we teach Ghanaian Language. Children should be given the opportunity to pick [learn] English quickly."

The P3 teacher is from the Eastern Region and holds the Four-Year Teacher's Certificate 'A.' She has 22 years teaching experience in lower primary, 15 in the Kapa Primary School. The teacher speaks and writes English, Twi, and Ga. Her first language is Twi, but for all other subjects except Ghanaian Language she uses English as MoI. She studied Twi as a subject for 12 terms and learnt to teach Twi while at college, although not specifically to primary school pupils. She assesses herself as an effective teacher of Ghanaian Language. She reports that she has received some in-service training on teaching the Ghanaian Language in primary school. The P3 teacher knows about the existence of the government language policy and says "it is a good policy" but she feels "English should dominate in the primary school."

The P4 teacher has the Two-Year Post-Secondary Teacher's Certificate 'A' and has taught for 27 years. She speaks English, Twi, and Ewe but can read and write only English and Twi. Her first language is Twi and she can teach Twi as a subject but uses English to teach all other subjects. She studied no Ghanaian language at any level and only learned to speak a Ghanaian language at home. This teacher is aware of the government language policy and says 'the implementation is not effective because most teachers do not read and write in the school language.' She also thinks that the teaching of the Ghanaian language should be "a must in the training college...."

Two P4 teachers, one P1 teacher and one P2 teacher were involved in the focus group discussion during the second data collection period. In reacting to what they thought prompted the introduction of the present language policy for schools, the P2 teacher opined that it was because "English is the second language and the children can't speak it properly, I think the parents themselves use the local language in the house so it will be better to use the local language which the children understand better to ensure good understanding of lesson."

The P1 teacher said since "they (children) are very young and it (Ghanaian language) is their own language, it will be better to use it to teach them. The P4 teacher admitted, "The use of the local language will promote children's learning of a second language."

Looking at the language policy in relation to what is happening in the school, the teachers agreed that it is useful to employ both English and the Ghanaian language but to give pupils enough English to be able to transit successfully to the use of English as MoI at P4.

The other P4 teacher said "by the time the child moves from P1–P3, s/he has already been exposed to the mother tongue (L1) and so learning in a second language (English) is not very difficult but moving over to P4, the transition makes things difficult ...so the use of both English and Twi is more encouraging."

In focus group interviews during the second data collection, most teachers advocated a 50–50 bilingual education in the primary school. Left to them, however their priority would be the use of the Ghanaian language as MoI.

In individual interviews during the second data collection period, in general the teachers interviewed agreed that the Ghanaian language can help pupils to understand lessons better and that pupils participated more enthusiastically when the L1 was used in teaching, yet the school's own English-only policy did not permit them to use the L1 as MoI except when teaching Ghanaian language lessons. One other problem with the use of the local language as MoI, according to the teachers, was that apart from one or two teachers who have a working knowledge of Twi, none of them is a native speaker.

The P2 teacher said, “Both languages (English and Twi) are very important to the pupils and the family for fluent expression in the house and at school.” Furthermore, a few of the teachers admitted that they were adequately trained to teach in the local language and to use it as MoI. Nevertheless, one teacher commented, “The use of the second language (English) for instruction in schools should start from P1.” To this teacher, if only the Ghanaian language were used to teach all subjects it would “not help children to understand the second language let alone to speak it.” Another teacher added that “due to low exam grades at the JSS level, much importance should be attached to the teaching of English from P1.”

All teachers ranked English, Mathematics, and Integrated Science as “very important.” They ranked Environmental Studies, Music and Dance, Religious and Moral Education and Ghanaian Language and Culture as “good” subjects in that order.

Pupils

Researchers interviewed 16 pupils, eight boys and eight girls from P1 through P4. Their ages ranged from five to 11. Out of the 16 pupils, four speak only Twi, two speak only English, and 10 speak both English and Twi. While only one said the only language he can use in class is English, the other 15 said they use Twi as Ghanaian language to communicate in class. Thirteen pupils speak Twi as their first language while English is the L1 for two of them and Ewe for another. At home seven of the pupils speak only Twi, five speak only English, and three speak both Twi and English. One pupil speaks Hausa and Twi at home. Eight of the pupils said they speak English at school, seven say they speak Twi and English, and one says he speaks only Twi.

Supervisors

The head teacher of Kapa Primary School was enthusiastic about the language policy. He said, “when we teach the Ghanaian language in lower primary classes children can articulate in it and it will assist them in the learning of English.” He says that he would have encouraged the proper implementation of the policy if it were not for the school’s own policy of total use of English as MoI in the lower primary.

On the other hand, both the Circuit Supervisor and the Assistant Director (AD) for Supervision were vehemently opposed to the language policy. According to the Circuit Supervisor, the policy “should be revised and “teachers should use English right from the onset of education and teaching language as a subject.” On the surface this seems surprising as the Circuit Supervisor and the AD Supervision are both officers who have very little to do with Kapa School because the school is private. Yet it looks as if their attitudes are consistent and in conformity with the metropolitan educational district whose policy is in consonance with Kapa Primary School regarding the use of English as MoI. The Metropolitan Director of Education herself is opposed to the use of Ghanaian language as a MoI.

LANGUAGE USE INSIDE AND OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM

With regard to pupils' preference for asking and answering questions in class, all four P1 pupils say they prefer to ask and answer questions in English. Two pupils prefer to use English because they understand it, one says it is his best language, and another says, "because the teacher says so."

The P2 pupils prefer to use English when asking and answering questions. The reasons are varied. Three pupils use English because their teacher says they should speak English. One of them says, "I want to learn it." All four P2 pupils want the teacher to teach in English. Two give as reasons that they want to "speak English well;" two say they want to learn it.

One P3 pupil prefers to use Twi to ask and answer questions in class because he understands it. Two pupils use English because they understand English better. One pupil uses English and Twi because "sometimes...I do not understand Englishso I use Twi." The three P3 pupils want the teacher to teach in English for various reasons. Two prefer English because they understand it, and a third wants "to learn it." One prefers the teacher to teach in Twi "for understanding."

Two P4 pupils prefer to use English because "Teacher has asked us to use English always." One uses English because "I want to be fluent in it." One pupil prefers to use Twi because he understands it." All four P4 pupils think the teacher should use English to teach. When asked why, two pupils said, "I want to learn and be fluent." Another pupil said that some pupils in the class do not understand Twi and therefore English should be used; a fourth pupil said the teacher should use English because "I like it."

Generally, P1, P2, and P4 teachers use English in interacting with pupils in class. The P1 teacher speaks English as well as Twi and reads and writes both. She can teach Twi, but for all other subjects she uses English as MoI. In P3 there is a mixture of English and Twi for class interaction. Three P1 pupils want the teacher to teach in Twi so that they can understand the lessons. One pupil prefers that the teacher use Twi because she understands it well. During break and at other times teachers interact with P1 pupils in both English and Twi.

In pupil-pupil interactions inside classrooms, some P1 pupils say they use English, others Twi, others a mixture of Twi and English. At play Twi and English are mixed for interaction. This is similar for P2 pupils. Pupils in P3 say they speak Twi with other pupils in the classroom because they all understand it. They use a mixture of Twi and English at play. P4 pupils all say they use Twi when they are talking to their friends in the classroom and out of the classroom. Pupils' reasons for choice of language in and out of the classroom include:

I understand it (Twi) better

My friends like English.

[I prefer Twi;] It is our home language.

The teacher says we should speak English.

We come from abroad and we don't like Twi.

[Twi;] My friends don't understand English.

Despite the school's own language policy, Twi-speaking pupils at Kapa School report that they often use their mother tongue in the classroom and on the playground.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Researchers observed the P1 teacher on two occasions during English and Mathematics lessons. Throughout the lesson only English was used as MoI. Some of the children talked among themselves in Twi but asked and answered questions in English. The class answered most of the questions in chorus. There were a lot of charts for both Mathematics and English lessons. The teacher motivated her pupils with praise and sometimes with concrete incentives, like toffees and lollipops. The teacher gave a lot of exercises in class, which she went round to supervise. Children were neatly dressed and sat in groups around tables.

Four lessons were observed in P2, two in Mathematics and two in English. During these lessons researchers observed that the teacher used English throughout as MoI. Children asked and answered questions in English, but interacted among themselves in both Twi and English.

The P3 teacher also taught in English. She began with a warming-up physical exercise. The teacher asked the pupils to "stand up, sit down, stand up," before introducing the lesson. She often asked questions in English and pupils answered in English but when answers were not adequate she explained further in Twi. The MoI for English class was English. The teacher led pupils to define the wind as "moving air." Pupils often gave choral responses. The teacher used a lot of teaching and learning materials; there were charts with pictures depicting fruits, vegetables, the weather, animals, and a man using leaves to cover his head because it was raining. At one point in the lesson a child answered a question in Twi and there was spontaneous laughter by the rest of the class. Pupils contributed to the lesson mostly in English. One pupil demonstrated his English ability when he said, "my mother says when there's thunder and the TV is on we have to put it [the TV] off." The lesson ended with the teacher asking pupils to clear their desks.

The P4 teacher was observed in Mathematics during which English was the MoI. Children communicated among themselves in both English and Twi, usually in undertones to avoid teacher's reprimand. Children responded to teacher's questions in chorus but teacher did nothing about it. Pupils had enough materials, they had a Mathematics set, and the teacher drew charts on the chalkboard with shapes and figures.

Researchers observed 14 lessons in Kapa School for the second data set--English, Mathematics, Environmental Studies, and Ghanaian language (Twi). All teachers still used English to teach all subjects except Twi reading where the P2 teacher used a mixture of English and Twi. Pupils still interacted with each other in class in both English and Twi but responded to and interacted with teachers in English. This was in line with the school's English-only language policy.

One exemplary lesson observed was a P2 Mathematics lesson titled "Story problems." At 9:00, the teacher introduced the lesson by giving out quantities of bottle tops to some children. She then asked those children to give out some of the bottle tops to other pupils. Children were asked to share the counters equally with friends. Then the teacher asked children to describe what they were doing, to which they responded, "we are sharing 10 bottle tops between two people, among five people and among 10 people." The teacher then asked, "How do you write these problems in figures?." One pupil volunteered to write one problem on the chalkboard as follows: $10 \div 2 =$, other children followed with $10 \div 5$ and $10 \div 10$.

At this juncture the teacher wrote the following problems on the chalkboard:

$$12 \div 4 = \quad 12 \div 2 = \quad 12 \div 3 = \quad 12 \div 6 \text{ and } 12 \div 12 =$$

The class was then asked to read the story problems on the chalkboard in chorus. Pupils talked among themselves both in English and Twi but spoke to the teacher only in English. The teacher, however, spoke English throughout the lesson. At 9:15 the teacher distributed Mathematics exercise books to the pupils and asked them to use their bottle tops to work out the problems in their exercise books. She then asked pupils who got some sums wrong from the previous day's work to either move to the back of the class for help. Those who thought they could do the exercises correctly on their own worked alone at their seats. At 9:20 pupils got up occasionally to collect a pencil sharpener from the teacher's desk to sharpen pencils. Pupils streamed in a file to put down their Mathematics exercise books on the steps in front of the class. The lesson ended at 9:30 am.

This was an effective lesson, in part, because the teacher made the lesson very practical. All pupils had the necessary materials to work with (bottle tops, exercise books). The teacher encouraged participation of pupils and the teacher demonstrated problem solving on the chalkboard before asking pupils to try their hand at it. The teacher attended to individual pupils who either had problems with

the new lesson or with the correction of the previous work. There was order in the classroom; pupils' exercise books were distributed in an orderly manner and when they completed the work they submitted exercise books in a neat file. The language of instruction and teacher-pupil interaction was English, and since the teacher's language was simple and clearly articulated children responded in an encouraging manner.

MATERIALS

All pupils in P1 through P4 had plenty of textbooks and learning materials. Each pupil had his or her own set of textbooks to use at home or at school. Pupils had sufficient numbers of exercise books, pencils, and other school supplies, and most carried these things around in book bags. Teachers also had ample teaching supplies, including charts. There were enough P2 textbooks in both Mathematics and English for all children. The teacher used the question-and-answer method most of the time.

WOSEC TEACHER TRAINING COLLEGE

WOSEC TEACHER TRAINING COLLEGE PROFILE

WOSEC Teacher Training College (TTC) is a mixed teacher training college in a very large town in the Ashanti Region of Ghana. The college admits students from all over Ghana. A majority of them, however, come from the Ashanti, Central and Eastern Regions. Of the 16 students interviewed, eight were Ashantis, four were Fantes, three were Akyems and one was an Ewe from the Volta Region. The Ghanaian languages offered at WOSEC were Twi and Ewe but at the time of the second follow-up visit Ewe had been dropped for lack of tutors.

The college has adopted a policy whereby every student learns Twi not only as a subject but also to use it as MoI. The students write internal exams in the Ghanaian languages they have studied. The principal said,

Every teacher going out of this college should be able to read and write Twi; even if you are a Northerner and you study in this college, by the time you leave here you must speak and write the Twi.

Students were not only trained in the use of Twi as MoI but an attempt has been made to introduce Ewe, another Ghanaian language, for teaching and learning. The principal made it clear that the second year students (now out teaching) were the batch of students that officially began the intensive study and use of Twi and other Ghanaian languages, especially Ewe as both subjects and MoI. It was amazing to learn that once a non-Ghanaian, a Liberian refugee, admitted to the college learnt to speak, read, write, and teach Twi to primary school pupils as a result of the TTCs' bilingual program.

To pursue the above policy, the college organized a series of workshops for tutors that resulted in the translation of some textbooks into Twi and Ewe, e.g., Mathematics, Science, and Environmental Studies.

Both tutors and students of the colleges said that tutors give instruction in methods of teaching the Ghanaian language as a subject as well as using it as MoI to teach other subjects. There were six periods of methodology a week for three terms during the second year. The principal said that this arrangement has gone on for the past two years and will be intensified in subsequent years in order to strengthen the bilingual teaching and learning program. The students confirmed that they regularly engage in peer teaching by way of practicing the methods they have learned in the teaching of Ghanaian language and its use as MoI. Before students are organized for peer teaching sessions, tutors give demonstration lessons in nearby primary schools.

In addition to the textbooks the WOSEC tutors have translated into Twi and Ewe, the GTZ program is giving support to the scheme at the college by supplying textbooks and supplementary readers in Ghanaian languages.

ATTITUDES AND PERCEPTIONS OF THE LANGUAGE POLICY AND USE IN SCHOOLS

Administrators

The principal, vice principal, head of department and tutors interviewed showed positive disposition to the language policy. All were aware of the policy and could state it correctly. The principal showed much enthusiasm for the policy. When asked whether he thought the policy as it stood was good and was to be pursued, he responded, "I love it." The principal himself is an Ewe and referred to his children brought up in a non Ewe-speaking environment and laments their inability to speak, read, and write Ewe. They only speak Twi and Ewe. He advocated for the policy's implementation countrywide, saying he wished "all children would be educated properly in their mother tongues." The principal added, "our [WOSEC] students are being trained to teach in the Ghanaian language; in fact, Ghanaian language is now a compulsory subject for all students in the college."

The heads of English, Science, Environmental Studies, Twi (Ghanaian language), Mathematics and Education were interviewed and had organized their department so as to make it possible for demonstration lessons to be given to students in the Ghanaian languages.

Tutors

All six tutors interviewed had requisite qualifications for teaching at that level and most of them had taught at the college for more than eight years. The tutors interviewed were literate in Twi and Fante and could speak these fluently. Ghanaian language and Science tutors said they taught and conducted their demonstration lessons in Ghanaian language. The others taught their subjects in English because "certain terms cannot be translated easily into Twi and Fante."

TTC Students

The sixteen students selected at random and interviewed comprised eight each from the second (PS2) and third (PS3) years; nine male students and seven females. Six came from the Ashanti Region, four from the Central Region, two from the Volta Region, one from the Western Region and three from the Eastern Region. Eleven of the students interviewed could speak and write Twi; five could only speak or write it. Six can speak, read, and write both Twi and Fante. Eight of the students, five male and three female were native speakers of Twi while three of the rest had learned Fante from childhood.

The students interviewed were aware of the language policy. Twelve of the students had a positive attitude towards the policy. Five students thought using Ghanaian language MoI helps pupils adjust quickly to school life in the early stages; it makes pupils understand lessons and contribute in meaningful ways. The other seven stated that the use of Ghanaian language facilitates easy teacher-pupil interaction in primary schools. Four of the students were negatively disposed towards the language policy and said that in the primary schools, it was the cause of pupils' inability to perform well in English. They compared pupils in the public schools to those in the private schools and indicated that English should be used as MoI in the primary schools to bring public schools to the level of private schools.

At the TTC level, the students said they learn the Ghanaian language for only a few months before their promotion examination and that "it is not fair because most of the students take three languages for the first time in the college." All the students urged the authorities to make the study of Ghanaian language compulsory at the Senior Secondary School (SSS) level to enable prospective entrants to teacher training colleges to have the needed background.

AVAILABILITY OF LEARNING MATERIALS

Some textbooks in Science, Mathematics, and Environmental Studies have been translated into the Ghanaian language for students to use. Tutors also guide students to prepare cards, charts and other teaching learning materials from local resources.

LESSONS AND MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION

Both tutors and students said lessons are given in methodology of teaching the Ghanaian language as subject as well as using it as MoI to teach other subjects. There were six periods of methodology in a week for three terms during the second year.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Kapa School is the only private school of the multi-site case study. The school is rich in resources--pupils have their own books, textbooks and book bags, there are ample materials for teaching and

learning, the teachers have been trained and they teach creatively, the school has well-maintained and beautiful buildings. Kapa School is also the only school where some pupils report that they speak only English at home. Well-educated parents support pupils' schooling and English instruction; one reported that he supports the intensive use of English to enable pupils to perform well in their school subjects to enable them earn higher qualifications. Whereas parents in some rural areas said they want their children to learn English to "go places," Kapa School parents know that the way to "go places" is to earn higher qualifications. Kapa School highlights how important such resources are in providing a quality education for children. Whereas the English-only medium is often cited as the reason for pupils' success at Kapa and at other schools, the entire set of resources in this particular context of teaching and learning is critical, and cannot be separated from the English-only medium in trying to understand the school's and the pupils' successes.

The four teachers interviewed support the use of English as a MoI. The head teacher seems to understand the rationale of the national school language policy very well and he supports it. Surprisingly, he says he would encourage the proper implementation of the national school language policy if it were not for the school's own policy of English MoI. He observed, "when we teach the Ghanaian language in lower primary classes children can articulate in it and it will assist them in the learning of English."

Out of the four teachers interviewed, two of them could be described as adequately prepared to teach Ghanaian language both as MoI and subject--although they are only asked to teach Ghanaian language as a subject in this setting. Both P1 and P4 teachers had received training in the teaching of Ghanaian language at college, both as MoI and subject, while the P2 teacher had not received any training in Ghanaian language teaching. The P3 teacher received some in-service training in teaching the Ghanaian language in primary school. Since teachers are called on to teach Ghanaian Language as a subject in this Early English medium school, this training is also important and beneficial for them and for the pupils whom they teach.

Chapter Four: Noto School and Teacher Training College

BY

ALBERT A. K. AWEDOBA

Institute of African Studies

University of Ghana/Legon

NOTO PRIMARY SCHOOL

COMMUNITY PROFILE

The Noto Township is located about five kilometers from one of the district headquarters in the Upper East Region of Ghana and is linked to it by an asphalt road. The Township has a population of several hundred, which includes employees of the Irrigation Company of the Upper Region of Ghana (ICOUR) drawn from the district and elsewhere in Ghana. The dominant language is Kasem, one of the 11 government-sponsored languages. However, other non-local languages are also spoken. Of them, Twi is the most popular.

The Noto Township, the Noto River, a tributary of the White Volta and the Noto Dam are associated historically. The township comprises workshops and a cluster of neatly laid out residences built in the mid- to late 1970s to accommodate the senior and junior staff of a British company responsible for the construction of the Noto Dam and for the setting up of the infrastructure for an irrigation scheme. Until 1974 when the building of the Noto earth dam began, the area in question was bushland. One remarkable feature of 'new' Noto is the fact that most of the houses here are property of the irrigation section of the Ministry of Agriculture. As a place once perceived to have had better modern infrastructure, some well-to-do indigenes had also attempted to put up residences here; however, with electricity now available in the nearby district capital, interest in Noto has waned. The Noto Township is relatively well endowed with amenities. It has potable water, electricity, a staff canteen, a clinic, a large market, and a fairly good network of roads that link the district capital to the regional capital a relatively short distance away.

Ministry of Agriculture staff who live in the residences are subject to occasional transfer. Because the township community lacks the demographic stability expected of regular settlements, it also lacks some of the features of settlements in this district. For example, it has no acknowledged leader such as chief. For ritual purposes the jurisdiction of the elder of one of the autochthonous clan-settlements is

acknowledged. He has power to lease out land for settlement. Irrigating plots are vested, however, in the Ministry authorities, and clan-settlement authorities do not interfere in the affairs of the township.

The Noto School is unusual in one respect: the school does not serve one community; rather, the community from which it draws its pupils comprises the township itself, main district headquarters, and surrounding clan-settlements. Pupils have been known to come from the border town nearby to attend the school. The Noto School is perceived to offer better primary education, measured by a child's competence and performance in English, than most other schools in the district.

Noto Primary School co-exists with other educational facilities, including a nursery, from which it draws its pupils, and the new JSS that is housed in temporary buildings that were originally intended for another school. Within a radius of 2 kilometers are the Niakora Primary and JSS. These schools are government schools where implementation of the language policy would be expected, as these serve local clan-settlements. The district capital also has other schools run by the Roman Catholic mission and the government. These include vocational schools, senior secondary schools, and even a university faculty.

As mentioned above, the language of the District is Kasem, a Grusi language. Nankani, an Oti-Volta language, is also spoken. Both belong to the Gur or Voltaic family of languages commonly found in Northern Ghana and neighboring West African countries. Most people here are bilingual in the two languages. Kasem is generally accepted as the language for out-group communication. The indigenous people are Kasena-Nankana and it is not always possible to say who is Kasena and who is Nankana. Centuries of co-existence and inter-marriage have almost blurred the distinction as far as the community is concerned. The most visible symbol of common identity is the institution of chief. There is one paramount chief for the area. Cultural institutions may differ slightly from one clan-settlement to the other but these are not an issue.

SCHOOL PROFILE

The Noto School is a few hundred meters from the township. Access is easy as it is located on the road from the district headquarters. The school was established in 1988 as a nursery for the children of Ministry of Agriculture senior staff and for those engaged in the Noto Dam project. Many of the staff at the time had been transferred to this district from other parts of Ghana. It has been said that until the establishment of the nursery, some Irrigation Project workers sent their children to an English medium school in the regional capital, a considerable inconvenience in view of the distance, time, and risks associated with long distance travel. Therefore, over time the special purpose nursery grew into the Noto School that is now patronized by local people in salaried employment and by salaried staff on transfer from other Regions and districts. These constitute a kind of the local elite enjoying relatively high incomes.

The Noto Primary School seems to embody the concept of an experimental school although it remains within the mainstream of public schooling. Experimental schools in Ghana are usually urban-based; they are free to determine their own curriculum and can teach foreign languages if they so wish.

(Indeed, it was hinted that Noto School might soon introduce French into its curriculum.)

Experimental schools can also employ teachers and pay salaries at levels the school authorities deem appropriate. They can and usually do take fees that are higher than those charged by the public schools. Often referred to derogatorily as ‘Cyto schools,’ experimental schools are perceived as more effective than the public elementary school which has lost the confidence of many parents in urban Ghana.

Noto’s main competitor is a school run by Roman Catholic nuns that has been in existence since the late 1970s. The difference between the two schools lies in the fact that the Catholic school seems not to tailor its instruction specifically to meet the needs of the child whose first language may be any other language than Kasem.

Noto Primary School is housed in two blocks, roofed with metal, and joined by an office attachment to form a horseshoe shape. The compound is spacious, neat, and well maintained. Classrooms are equipped with desks and tables. Help for the construction of the school block came from the Parent Teacher Association (PTA), that is, parents, who levied themselves to generate the funds needed to begin the foundation of the school building; the Adventists Development Relief Agency, an NGO; the District Assembly; and the irrigation company. The school compound was first occupied in 1993 before the buildings were fully completed.

Although the township has had electricity for more than ten years, the school did not appear to have been wired for it. The school benefits from some of the amenities available to the township, such as the clinic run by the irrigation company. The school has access to potable water through a pipe on the school compound and it has a latrine. The school has a small food market where women sell cooked food to the children at break time.

Noto Primary School has six teachers; two males and four females. The head teacher’s responsibilities extend from the nursery to P6. The JSS is situated some distance from the primary unit and has its own head. Noto School has no housing meant specifically for its teachers, however, some of them live in accommodation intended for staff of the irrigation company. None of the teachers has an independent means of transport and this impacts on teacher punctuality. Like their teachers, the majority of the pupils live some distance from the school compound. Some of them are children of irrigation company staff; most live either in the district headquarters or in the dispersed clan-settlements.

The irrigation company provides a vehicle (open truck) to convey pupils to and from school, and staff benefit from this service. The school does not, however, control the movement of these vehicles that transport pupils to and from the town, making two regular trips in the morning and again in the afternoon. The vehicles pick [up] children from a central point in the main town and drop them off at the same point or on the way. A child who lives in a clan-settlement either will have to walk to school or walk to the central point and take the vehicle. A P2 girl aged eight years who lives at one of the sub-chiefdoms (four to eight kilometers from center of the district capital) either walks or has someone take her on bicycle to the central point to board the vehicle to school. Lateness is unavoidable with this arrangement; the first vehicle arrives in school at about 8 a.m. and the second does not get to school before 9 a.m. when classes are already in progress.

Lower classes at Noto School have larger sizes. Class sizes range from 55 in P1 to 37 in P6. Males outnumber females only slightly, 48 to 52 in favor of boys. There are no significant differences between the sexes in terms of the repeats. The dropout rate is low. No child appears to have dropped out; however, a few girls have been pulled out by parents and sent to other schools. One child had gone to join her mother in another town, another was withdrawn by her mother and sent subsequently to another school (transportation problems were cited). One mother going for further education had found it necessary to send the child to her mother (i.e., the child's grandmother) to attend another school.

ATTITUDES AND PERCEPTIONS OF LANGUAGE POLICY AND LANGUAGE USE

Attitudes and perceptions will be discussed from the perspectives of the stakeholders: the parents of pupils (13 were interviewed), teachers (four were interviewed) and the pupils (15 were interviewed). Additionally researchers interviewed the PTA chairman and the supervisors of schools. It should be emphasized that Noto does not implement the official language policy. Most stakeholders to whom researchers spoke support this. Teachers, parents and most pupils are happy that teaching is in an English medium.

Community

The PTA chairman, an employee of the Ministry of Agriculture on transfer to this district, favors the use of English MoI. He would, however, prefer the introduction of a language of wider communication, specifically a national language to serve as medium of instruction (MoI) in all schools.

Although the interviews were limited to the immediate stakeholders, the impression is that the wider community prefers the use of English as MoI in schools. The community position, echoed by one illiterate parent, seems to be that an early use of English enhances the learning of that language and that fluency in English is both evidence of formal education and a gateway to employment in the formal sector.

Parents

The majority of respondents were educated males in the active age group of 30 to 40; two were above 50 years. Most were Kasena but diverse groups such as Akan, Ewe, Bulsa, and Ibarra (a Nigerian ethnic group) were represented. Program Monitoring and Evaluation (PME) statistics for P2 and P3 show that 85% of the children are ethnically Kasena. Parents' occupations differed; among them are farmers and wage earners (civil servants). PME findings confirm that the majority of P2 and P3 parents were teachers, office workers, or farmers. The majority of mothers were traders, teachers, and seamstresses. One out of five parents were in the teaching profession. About half of the fathers and one out of three mothers were in an occupation that required literacy skills. Educated parents are literate in English but less than half were literate in Kasem, the local language.

PME data sets again show that Noto P2 and P3 pupils reported that 92% and 85% respectively of fathers read at home. The figures for mothers were lower by about 15% for both classes. While the reading being referred to by children is unlikely to be regular reading at home, nevertheless, the responses confirm that most parents in Noto are literate. This is an interesting finding given that the Upper Regions have the lowest literacy rates in Ghana. It would be expected that Noto parental literacy rates would be much higher than those for other primary schools in the district and would compare favorably with those for other sites studied by IEQ2. For example, while in the case of the Kapa (private) School P2 class 82% of fathers and 72% of mothers read at home, in the case of Medofo Primary School only 33% of mothers read at home. In the same school, two-thirds of P2 fathers and less than 60% of P2 mothers read at home.

Parents maintained that Kasem was spoken in most households in addition to one or two other languages such as English. The households themselves seemed to differ in size and they ranged from the unit with one child to the largest with 12 children.

From the information currently available, nearly all parents preferred English as MoI rather than the local language, Kasem. Some felt that as a mother tongue and prevalent language of the community, children were sufficiently equipped in Kasem, and that learning it need not be considered a priority. Others felt that command of Kasem did not enhance future prospects. "Kasem will not help the child," one non-Kasena parent remarked. Non-Kasena parents subscribed to this view. Nevertheless there was a minority who favored a bilingual medium involving these two languages, since they said they perceived the two languages to be complementary.

The reasons for parental choices of English MoI differed slightly. It appears that most parents assumed that an English MoI helps children learn English, and that competence in English promotes education, and a good education improves pupils' future prospects in life. These assumptions are implied in comments like the following:

I prefer English...because that will make the child have a lot of interest to learn, [more] than when Kasem is used.

This was said by a farmer with six years of primary education. The feeling that literacy in English is the basis for future success in life is reflected in the remark of this non-literate parent:

I see the difference between those who are illiterate and those who are literate; so I want my child to learn English and become an important person in future.

There is also a minority perception that a Kasem MoI might retard learning. One non-Kasena parent said he insisted that his children did not speak Kasem at home. Implied in his comment is a perception that use of English even in the home would enhance the child's competence in English.

Although parents thought all subjects were important they rated English and Mathematics highest and ranked Ghanaian language and Music lowest. When the official language policy, which the majority of parents interviewed did not know, was presented to them at the time of the second data collection, most changed their views on the relevance of the local language. They said they felt that the use of the Ghanaian language as MoI and its teaching were very important. They understood the basis for the policy to be that learning would be enhanced if the MoI were the child's language. Mr. Achilles, a retired civil servant echoed this sentiment:

The children already speak the language (the L1), so at the basic stage it is better to teach them in the language so that they will understand things better. At that stage they need to be taught in a language they will understand...clearly. So from P4 they have already got the basics of their own language. They can then use English as a medium and then have Kasem as a subject.

A mother who had earlier preferred English as subject and instructional medium bared her heart on the subject. She disclosed that she had never been taught Kasem, her mother tongue, in school and consequently could neither read nor write this language. She had great admiration for those Southern Ghanaian older women who, despite their lack of formal education, are still able to read the Bible in their local languages. She herself had once been deeply embarrassed by a request to read the scriptures in Kasem at a church service. It had been assumed that being an educated Kasena she would be literate in Kasem.

Though the sample of 13 parents may seem small, their perceptions are likely to be representative of the opinions of the parents of other children in this school and perhaps also of the parents of children

in less endowed schools in this area. The popularity and appeal of Noto Primary School is based on its use of an English medium that was necessitated initially by the ethnic and linguistic mix of the Noto Township. There is also the general Ghanaian tendency to measure level of education by perceived fluency and command or sophistication in the use of English. For example, in another of the sites discussed in this report, a parent remarked that a truly educated person is “one who has forgotten his mother tongue.”

It seems that the lower a person’s level of education, the greater the premium placed on English as a measure of being educated. The *raison d’être* of formal education for most people has been the acquisition of a job, a legacy of colonialism (see Grindal 1974). Colonial policy in Northern Ghana was aimed at educating the traditional elite to provide the leadership that the British expected of an elite and to perform the clerical tasks that required some literacy (see Bening 1990). There is also the disdain that colonial officials exhibited for everything local and the effect of this attitude on the early crop of semi-educated people from the area. When this writer was in school in the 1960s, it was a punishable offense for a pupil to speak the local language on the school compound.

It is the perception of most people (educated and non-educated alike) that command of the local language, and knowledge of the traditional culture and ways of life are a function of an association with the home and tradition and not necessarily with schooling. That is to say, people who have not been to school are usually regarded as more knowledgeable in and conversant with the local language and customary ways than those who have spent much of their childhood and youth away from home and in schools. Teachers and educated people are not perceived to be necessarily good users of the local language. Kasena parents do not expect their children to gain a better command of the language through school and many do not appreciate the benefits of Kasem literacy.

All this begins to change when parents are themselves told that the government policy advocates local languages as medium of instruction at the lower grades and that this is a better for the children. Then, it dawns on them that this must indeed be more reasonable than the former insistence that things local were inferior.

Teachers

Researchers studied the three female teachers and one male teacher teaching P1 through P4. Three of the teachers and the head teacher are Kasena and the P2 teacher is Fante. Two had secondary education and three years of teacher education and the other two had basic education and four years of teacher training. Their years of teaching experience ranged from two to ten years. Though more than half of this time had been spent at Noto, each teacher was handling the current class for the first time. All teachers are bilingual in their first language, English, and another Ghanaian language.

The profiles of the teachers present a number of paradoxes. None of the three teachers whose first language is Kasem had been trained in a teacher training college teaching Kasem. Only one of them, the P4 teacher, claimed to be able to read and write Kasem. On the other hand, the P2 teacher who does not speak Kasem was actually trained in a college where Kasem is taught. She attended some Kasem classes at college although her objective was not to pass the prescribed examination in Kasem but rather to prepare to take the examination in Twi, which the college did not teach.

The only teacher who seemed to be fully conversant with the government's official language policy for schools was the teacher who did not teach the Ghanaian language and did not sympathize with the policy. The head teacher who usually stood in for the P2 teacher to teach Kasem did not seem to know the policy while the P2 teacher's understanding of the policy was partial. None of these teachers uses Kasem as MoI in class (not even the P1 teacher). With the exception of P4 teacher, the rest did not think it was useful to teach Kasem, the main local language.

The P1 teacher is 30 years old female. She holds a post primary teacher's qualification and has eight years of teaching experience, five of which were at the lower primary level. She has been at Noto for the past five years but this is her first time of handling this class. In addition to Kasem, her mother tongue, she speaks Wali. This teacher ranked Mathematics, English and Integrated Science as very important subjects but Ghanaian language, Religious and Moral Education, and Music and Dance were only "good" to teach but not important.

The P2 teacher holds the post-primary teacher qualification and has ten years of primary school teaching experience. She speaks Kasem, her mother tongue, as well as Hausa and Dagbani but does not read or write any of these. She has studied none of these languages at school; however, through interacting with speakers of the second languages she was able to acquire them. She made it clear that she did not study or learn to teach any Ghanaian language in college. This seems surprising in view of the requirement that every student must learn a Ghanaian language at TTC. This teacher rates all subjects as very important except Music and Ghanaian language; these are only "important."

The P3 teacher speaks, reads and writes the Akan dialects of Fante and Twi in addition to Ga. She studied Ga at primary and middle school, and Twi at the primary school. Though she did not speak Kasem fluently and did not list it as one of the languages that she speaks, she studied some Kasem at the training college. She said she did not learn to teach a Ghanaian language while at college, however she did learn how to teach language specifically to primary school pupils (i.e., language structure, vowels and consonants, and pronunciation). She ranked Mathematics, English, and Integrated Science as very important subjects, but Ghanaian Language, Religious and Moral Education, and Music and Dance were only "good" to teach but not important. She suggested that the time allowed for Ghanaian languages on the timetable be reduced to allow more time for other subjects.

It can be concluded that the P1 through P4 teachers' preparation for Ghanaian language teaching was limited or nonexistent. Teachers were trained in colleges where their first languages were not taught. However, at the training colleges, they participated in classes where languages that they did not speak were being taught. These teachers received pedagogical instruction meant for teachers who were first language speakers. They were exposed to the rudiments of language teaching but nothing more. All but one suggested that the college training was helpful to them in using a Ghanaian language as medium. One remarked on the transference of skills acquired to the teaching of other Ghanaian languages. Nevertheless, a teacher who has not been taught her or his first language as a subject and how to teach it may not know enough of it (or about it) to be able to teach that language effectively, even if he or she is familiar with general teaching methods. This is what prevails in Noto.

Pupils

The PME statistics for P2 and P3 show that over 60% of the children are Kasem-speaking and an additional 20% speak it as a second home language. The non-Kasena portion, less than 40%, speak one of 13 different languages as a first home language, although none is spoken by more than five pupils. The rest of the other languages are each spoken by one or two individuals in the classes in question.

In addition to the Kasem-speaking pupils, 13 and nine children (representing 17% and 11%) have as home language or second home language English and Hausa respectively. Most of the children were bilingual and, in some cases, trilingual. Many of those who were not ethnic Kasena understood Kasem. While these statistics suggest that comprehension of Kasem (the predominant local language) is widespread among Noto School children, the school's policy remains one that prescribes English as the MoI at all levels of primary education. At the follow up interviews, when the official language policy was explained to parents, some Kasena parents expressed sympathy for the non-Kasena pupils, if Kasem were substituted as MoI for the lower classes. However, other parents, including one non-Kasena parent, were of the view that non-Kasem speaking children would cope with a Kasem medium of instruction.

Looking at the pupils in this school, it is hard to distinguish them from some of the children in certain urban schools. Their uniforms were generally neat, they wore shoes (snickers [or sneakers]) and carried backpacks. Their meals were above average: rice, beans, noodles, and so on, mixed with bits of meat. Their turn out suggests that parents invested more in these children than the average local parent would or could. Most pupils gave Navrongo as their hometown. Most of the children stayed with their parents and most were exposed to some English at home. This is not surprising given that most parents were literate and in occupations that required literacy skills.

The perceptions and views of the children on languages preferred and the languages they used with each other and with their teachers are insightful. They shed some light on the issues of interest in the

IEQ2 research and contribute to the research questions on attitudes, how the language policy is implemented in the primary schools in Ghana, and what possible explanations exist for the way the language policy is being implemented.

In pupil-pupil interactions, one out of three pupils prefer Kasem and two out of three opt for English. Those who use English in inter-pupil interactions do so for various reasons, which include the feeling that English is good and has prospects, an opinion pupils held. For example, a P4 child said, "English can send me anywhere I like where people do not speak Kasem," and a P2 pupil said, "I would opt for English. If you meet somebody and the person spoke English you would understand him or her."

All of these children gave English and Kasem as the languages spoken in the school. They thought English was more popular in the school than Kasem, the local language, and that English was the medium of classroom intercourse. The languages that pupils used in class among themselves were English and Kasem. Three out of four gave English as the medium of classroom interaction among pupils. The reason advanced was that pupils could not speak the local language fluently. For example, a P2 child said, "I don't speak Kasem properly, so English is what I can best express myself well in." English becomes the lingua franca, the medium for communication between children who do not understand each other's languages. A P2 child seems to echo the views of a P4 child when he says, "My friends understand English but I cannot understand Twi and Ewe." For some pupils it is the difficulty of speaking fluent Kasem that accounts for the use of English. A number felt that the practice of speaking English was in itself intrinsically good. However, this revealing comment by a P1 pupil indicates that the attitudes of teachers have a role in children's disinterest in Kasem:

Our madam said we should not be speaking Kasem.

Those who prefer Kasem do so because they cannot express themselves in English. This view is suggested by this P2 child:

When you have not understood something and you cannot express your difficulty in English, you use Kasem.

The role of teachers in the preference for English as a medium in pupil-to-pupil interactions in the classroom cannot be denied. Teachers themselves set the example by their choice of medium for communication with individual children. Pupils' responses suggest that in classroom interactions with teacher, only in one out of six cases did the teacher speak Kasem to the pupil. In all other cases it was English. Outside the classroom, the teacher used English in three out of four cases. Pupils felt that the teacher used English in all cases when he or she communicated with others in the classroom. When pupils were asked about the medium of communication between the teacher and themselves and between the teacher and other pupils in the classroom the majority said that this was English. The P2

teacher was said to use English with pupils inside and outside the classroom. No pupil recollected her having used any other language. The P3 teacher used slightly more Kasem than the others. Of the Kasem-speaking teachers, the P4 teacher used Kasem the least, according to the children's perceptions. The picture painted is that teachers use far more English than Kasem with the pupils, whether in the classroom or outside. It is only in the case of Kasem lessons that Kasem is used as MoI. Even then, P2 pupils who are taught Kasem by the head teacher (because their class teacher does not speak Kasem) are taught the language through a mixture of Kasem and English, according to pupils.

Pupils were also asked to comment on their attitudes to the use of English and Kasem media of instruction in class, and to say whether they liked the Environmental Studies lesson taught in English. Would pupils suggest a change of medium, if they had an option? While all children in all classes gave English as the MoI and said they liked the use of English to teach Environmental Studies, half the sample would wish to see a change to a Ghanaian language medium if they had the choice. The following comments show these trends. P1 and P2 pupils said,

Sometimes I do not understand the English.

I understand English not much.

I do not understand Kasem very well.

Clearly there are pupils who do not understand enough English to benefit from the lessons and this pertains especially to P1 pupils. For one P4 child, it seems that loyalty to the first language is an important consideration in opting for the local language, "Kasem is our language."

It can be concluded from these responses that children like their lessons and the use of English to teach them. Children are divided on the question of a MoI for Environmental Studies. Half would have preferred the use of Kasem for reasons such as their inability to understand English. Some of those who do not see a need to replace the English medium did not understand Kasem.

Supervisors

The Circuit Supervisor and the Assistant Director (AD) for Supervision are both Kasena. The latter had a degree in Kasem and another subject. He was new at this schedule, however. Unlike the class teachers, the two officials were conversant with the language policy and would wish to see it implemented. They appreciated the benefits of using the local language as MoI in the area. They did not feel, however, that Noto's non-implementation of the policy required the application of sanctions.

LANGUAGE USE INSIDE AND OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM

On the playground or outside the classroom when children are on break, both Kasem and English are spoken pari pasu. Children are divided equally between those who think Kasem is used and those who think English is the medium of communication among children on break. This division is not surprising; some are using one language, some another, others may be using both languages but do not realize it. Children speak to communicate; they rarely stop to self-assess which language they are speaking.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

For the lower classes, teachers' pedagogical approaches center on choral repetitions combined with questions for which pupils are invited to respond individually. Small group activity is not frequent. In one case the teacher exhibited disciplinarian tendencies including knocks and insults. For approval, handclapping is the most common mode of expression. In P4 the lecture method is used in combination with question and answer dialogues between the teacher and pupils. The teaching pattern for classes above P1 usually comprise of class teaching followed by exercise set to be carried out in class.

Except for P1, teachers usually give homework. As the school does not permit children to take home school textbooks, the homework is copied into exercise books and taken home. Those who assist are mostly siblings but parents and other relations also help. In one exceptional case, a pupil reported having had private tuition at home. The language used is mostly English although Kasem is used too. From an inspection of the homework books it is clear that homework is given frequently in classes 3 and 4.

P4 pupils suggested that the teacher's approach, i.e., the questions that he or she poses, and the teacher's way of presenting the subject and ability to explain things, all go toward making a lesson interesting. Pupils said:

Teacher asks questions which we enjoy.

When teacher is teaching it is always interesting.

Teacher explains how the work is so I understand it.

Children's comprehension of the lesson is also important, as some of the P1 and P2 children's comments illustrate:

When I do not understand a language my teacher tells me (helps me).

Because I understand what is taught.

I am brilliant so the work is always cheap [easy] for me.

English makes a lesson interesting; it is not our language and we want to learn it.

This is one example of a lesson observed in Noto School. It was taught entirely in English, in line with the school's policy on MoI. It was a Mathematics lesson on division, and the head teacher was standing in to teach for the regular class teacher who was absent.

The teacher began by writing different mathematical symbols on the board, including the symbol for division. The class was invited to identify and name these symbols. Next, the class was asked if anyone could explain the concept of division. A girl said division referred to sharing; for example, two friends sharing something between them. The head teacher agreed.

Then the head teacher used simple sketches on the board to illustrate the concept of sharing. She drew a circle, shaded half of it, and left the other part unshaded. Then she drew two match stick figures, representing two persons, the individuals who would take the shaded and the unshaded portions of the circle.

The head teacher asked pupils how many balls a class would get if Noto Classes P1 and P2 shared four balls between them. She illustrated this by means of a diagram depicting four small circles enclosed in a larger circle. Children had no difficulty with this. Then, she drew six bananas and sketched three figures representing the children who would share the bananas. The bananas were drawn in pairs that should make the process rather too obvious. The illustration was not accurate, however, as the bananas resembled tubers of yam. The children laughed at this. Children had no difficulty with the answer. The head teacher illustrated how the answer is arrived at. She remarked, "You give one to each child, then you share the remaining three among the children."

At one point, five pupils were called to the front of the class to illustrate how objects can be shared or divided. The lesson continued in this vein for a while. It concluded with an exercise written on the board for children to copy into their exercise books and then complete.

Notable features of the lesson included the head teacher's readiness to take charge of the class vacated by the regular teacher, the use of sketches and drawings on the board to illustrate division as a process, and the use of everyday items and objects as illustrations, e.g. balls, shea fruits, and bananas to assist in making mathematical processes relevant to the children. The lesson was also made lively by activities that included getting children to come to the front of the class and act out processes. For the class exercise, pupils copied a number of questions into their exercise books and then carried out the

exercise, using beer bottle tops freely as counters. The teacher went round assisting pupils with the exercise. The teacher's demeanor was friendly and not authoritarian. She made few rebukes. When children found the teacher's illustrations inaccurate and laughed, she did not take offense. Her only reprimand was to mention one child by name and tell him not to chew paper since only cattle did this. The teacher praised children when appropriate. Unlike other teachers who would get the class to repeat correct answers in choral fashion, this teacher did not encourage this practice. The class was well managed and learning seemed to have taken place. Children seemed to have shown interest in the lesson.

Materials

Teachers appreciated the benefits of using teaching aids such as flash cards and posters. They described pupils' reactions to materials thusly: "Excited and curious," said the P4 teacher; and "eager to use materials," observed the P3 teacher. Teaching and learning materials for this school were limited to the textbooks, however; and the P2 teacher maintained that materials did not exist. The walls of the classrooms exhibited very little by way of pictures, tables, illustrations, posters or wall charts. Apala School in the Eastern Region, a former QUIPS school and an IEQ2 study school, was much better endowed than Noto School in this respect. It suggests that teacher in Apala put in more effort into making learning materials; perhaps as a result of participating in the ILP/QUIPS project where learning materials were emphasized. The few posters in evidence in Noto School had little bearing on the immediate educational needs of the pupils and researchers did not observe teachers using them for lessons. Other material objects included counters which individual pupils in the lower classes used during Mathematics lessons.

There were hardly any textbooks for Religious and Moral Education, Environmental Studies and Ghanaian Language. Only in P3, where, paradoxically, the teacher did not teach the language, were Ghanaian language textbooks available at a ratio of one book to three pupils. English and Mathematics fared much better and each class had books on those subjects. Mathematics was generally better provided than English. Pupils were not allowed to take home school textbooks, however. "They do not allow us to take the books home because people tear them," a P4 child remarked. However, some pupils had their own copies.

The PME findings showed, with regard to lower primary pupils access to textbooks, that in P2, 55% of the children did not have access to the Mathematics textbook at home. The situation in P3 was slightly better with 51% having a Mathematics textbook at home. Both classes had better access to English books for home use. About 63% and 64% of P2 and P3 pupils respectively had access to the textbook. In addition, about 74% and 72% of P2 and P3 respectively had access to some other book for use at home.

The shortage of textbooks meant that teachers spent considerable time reproducing texts or diagrams on the blackboard for general class use. In one case the teacher spent almost a full lesson doing this and while she busied herself with this pupils talked and played about.

CONCLUSIONS AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

From the above features of Noto School, a number of policy implications emerge:

1. Though the school does not implement the official language policy, the majority of pupils would not be disadvantaged by implementation since the majority of them are either L1 speakers or L2 speakers of the language prevalent in the area. However, there is a minority that may not benefit due to inadequate competence in the local language. This includes the children of government employees who have recently arrived in the district.
2. Though the teachers have not been specifically trained to teach the language, it is still possible for them to teach it and use it as MoI. To make them more effective in this, in-service training will be necessary. More importantly, the teachers need to change their attitudes to the language policy. Clearly, teachers here, just as other stakeholders, have not been educated to appreciate the value of using the first language as MoI. If the textbooks were written in the Ghanaian languages the teacher's tasks would be eased to a considerable extent. Linguists long ago realized that subject matter influences choice of language and language patterns or registers. The appropriate registers are yet to be established for teaching in the various Ghanaian languages. Issuing textbooks in the language would go a long way to codify registers for teaching the various subjects.
3. From the limited evidence discussed above, it would seem that in the past some teacher training colleges have not strictly followed the requirements on teaching the Ghanaian languages and have allowed some students to skip the formal study of Ghanaian languages.
4. Until the attitudes of parents and teachers and other stakeholders change to favor first language medium education, peremptory implementation of the official language policy will change the character of Noto School. If Kasem medium were to replace English in this school, most parents would be likely either to withdraw their children and send them to any school in the district that offers English medium education, or else select any other school that is more conveniently located and is relatively less expensive. The school could, however, woo back parents if it were to demonstrate eventually that quality education can be provided using the medium of the local language.
5. Noto's continued flouting of the official language policy could have effects beyond this school. Currently, it would seem that Noto, like schools of its kind, is relatively better than others in its vicinity. The superiority of some of these schools is due to a combination of factors including the commitment of parents and stakeholders, the motivation of teachers, and the willingness to commit resources and to monitor teaching. However, because the medium distinguishes these

schools it is medium that is credited with the improved performance in the English medium schools.

6. Finally, the ease with which parents changed their perceptions when the official policy was explained to them suggests that educating parents and other stakeholders on the rationale for mother tongue education and its potential benefits is the best means of intervention. The initially negative attitudes to mother tongue education reflect a failure in the past to dialogue with parents and to persuade them of the benefits of the language policy. In the absence of this intervention, the pre-colonial attitudes still hold sway. This is true not only for this site but perhaps also for many others in Ghana.

NOTO TEACHER TRAINING COLLEGE

NOTO TEACHER TRAINING COLLEGE PROFILE

In connection with IEQ2 research procedures, investigations for the third data collection visit extended to the Noto Teacher Training College (TTC) within the catchment area of the primary school under investigation. Researchers made two visits to this college; the preliminary visit in mid-2000 and the second in May 2001. On each occasion, researchers interviewed a sample of students and tutors, and in May 2001 they also observed some lessons. Here a detailed discussion is presented based on the larger sample of respondents from the third data set.

Established by the Roman Catholic Missionaries, Noto TTC is one of the oldest teacher training colleges in the northern part of Ghana. When there were few TTCs in the country, students came from all parts of the North and even the South to be trained here. Its alumni can still be found in many Regions of Ghana. Initially Noto TTC was a Three-Year Certificate 'B' Teachers Training College, its status was subsequently upgraded to a four-year Certificate A' college. In the 1970s it ran specialist certificate courses for Mathematics, Science, and Art before reverting to a post-primary and post-secondary training facility when the specialists schemes were phased out. It now serves as a center for the training of post-SSS teachers. Its graduates are expected to teach mainly in the primary school, but some specialization continues in the sciences. Some of its graduates might eventually even find themselves in the JSS schools, given the need for teachers with proper credentials at that level. Methodology lessons are tailored to equip trainees to handle both primary and JSS levels.

The reputation of the college and the fact that it is located in a Region with few TTCs has meant that Noto TTC draws students from many parts of the Region and beyond. Even students of Ewe and Akan origins are found in the college.

The college, in line with official requirements, teaches two of the officially sponsored Ghanaian languages: Kasem and Dagaare. Kasem had three active teachers; Dagaare had only one tutor. (The college has two other teachers qualified to teach Kasem; one of them was on secondment to an external programme while the other was in an administrative position.)

Noto TTC tutors come from different ethnic backgrounds. The majority were either local or people from the district; there were also a few tutors from other parts of Ghana. Most held university degrees and diplomas and a few had second degrees. The majority were trained professionals; some trained in secondary level colleges such as Noto TTC and had taught in primary schools before entering universities or tertiary colleges for their terminal qualifications. Noto TTC tutors teach subjects in their areas of specialization, such as Mathematics, Science, Ghanaian Language, English, Music, Education and others. College teaching focuses on both content and methodology; tutors were not only expected to impart knowledge but also to suggest and illustrate how students might handle the various topics at lower levels.

Although Noto School is seven kilometers from Noto TTC and college trainees conduct teaching practice at Noto School and other schools like it in the neighborhood, when the researchers visited Noto, only one Noto TTC alumna was on the Noto School staff.

STUDENTS PROFILE

The student population of the college was about 470 in 2001; about 28% female. The average age of students was 22 – 24 years and, with a few exceptions, students of Noto TTC were graduates of Senior Secondary Schools (SSS); few had ever worked as teachers previously. Most students had studied a Ghanaian language at the Junior Secondary School (JSS) level where the study of Ghanaian languages is compulsory, but most had not studied a Ghanaian language at the SSS, where it is not a core or compulsory subject.

L1 speakers of the predominant language (Kasem) were the majority group but they probably constituted less than half of the total college student population. Many students spoke only their mother tongue and English but a fair number also spoke second languages. While many of the students interviewed said they were literate in their mother tongue, a number were not literate in any Ghanaian language, even after studying one in college. Some students whose first languages are currently not officially sponsored said they were literate in those languages due to study in adult literacy classes or ‘night’ schools. This fact is perhaps an indication of interest in Ghanaian languages.

Most students expected that they would be posted to their home district on completion but there were also a few who opted for places outside their home district or home Region. The minority who preferred a posting outside the home area opted for urban centers and places in southern Ghana, although they did not claim to understand or speak fluently the languages of these places.

For ease of discussion in this section of the report, Noto TTC students can be categorized into three groups: Groups A, B and C.

Group A: Students whose first languages are spoken in another district of the region but are *not* taught as subjects in the college. It is estimated that about half of the student population falls within this group. This involves at least three different languages.

Group B: Students whose first language is spoken in the region *and* is taught as a subject in the college. Only one language (Kasem) and slightly less than half of the total student population falls in this category.

Group C: Students whose first language is spoken in another district and is also taught by the college as a subject. A small proportion of the population falls in this category.

In addition to these three categories, a few students speak languages from other Regions.

Awareness of the Official Language Policy

Most second- and third-year students were aware of the language policy and had a fairly accurate knowledge of what it stipulated. First-year students did not know the policy, perhaps because they had not been taught yet. All tutors interviewed had an accurate knowledge of the school language policy.

Language Options in The College

Teacher training regulations require that all teacher trainees be taught one Ghanaian language in college, usually the student's first language (L1) or one in which the student is fluent. Students are compelled to opt for one of the two languages offered at the college. The decision on what language to select was motivated by familiarity, among other considerations. First language speakers of the two languages taught would normally select their first language for study; however, one of the two languages, Dagaare, is spoken in a different Region (the Upper West), and does not therefore have many L1 speakers among the student population. Those whose first languages were not represented selected the language that was more closely akin linguistically to their first language. For most students this was Dagaare.³ There was a sizeable number of native speakers among the students. In the case of Gurune, the traditional joking and friendly relations that exist between the Grusi and the Dagaba ethnic groups was an additional factor favoring the selection of Dagaare. The expected medium of communication in language lessons was another factor in the selection of a language to study in college. In opting for a language with few first language speakers in the student population, students had the assurance that English rather than the target Ghanaian language would be used as medium of

³ Dagaare is an Oti-Volta language akin to Gurune and Kusaal.

instruction in class. For this reason Dagaare appealed to students whose first languages were not taught at the college.

Buli speakers were divided between Kasem and Dagaare. As there is no effective mutual intelligibility between Dagaare and Kusaal, Gurune and Buli or between Kasem and Buli, students who were compelled to take any of the college languages that were not their own found the study difficult, especially as in some cases they were encountering the language of study for the first time. Such students invariably complained about the lack of time to learn the second language although some did not object strongly to the learning of the second language. Students speaking any of the majority southern languages studied them in private and took their chances at the external examination.

ATTITUDES TO THE SCHOOL LANGUAGE POLICY:

School authorities, tutors, and most of the students interviewed approved of the policy, but they had reservations. While they accepted the pedagogical benefits of the policy for lower primary school, and some even suggested extending the Ghanaian language medium to the upper primary school classes, they felt that the policy was irksome to TTC students as it is limited to just the languages approved by government. It was pointed out that within the Upper East there were several large language communities that the policy did not cover, and such communities could not, therefore, derive any of the expected benefits of the policy because their languages had not been approved for use in schools and teachers could not be trained in those languages.

Tutors

All the language tutors have had some preparation at the tertiary level towards the teaching of Ghanaian languages, all other tutors have had no preparation for this. Those tutors whose first languages are officially sponsored like Kasem, Ga, Ewe, Dagaare and Dagbani have at some point been exposed to teaching that particular Ghanaian language, but other tutors lack this experience. With a few exceptions, tutors, regardless of ethnic background, supported in principle the teaching of Ghanaian languages and their use as media of instruction in the primary schools, even if not all of them emphasized the pedagogical benefits of first language medium in the interviews. Those who were mindful of the education benefits echoed views such as the following:

It must be studied in the primary school because it helps [in] the understanding of concepts in other areas.

Beginning with the mother tongue...helps develop the English language.

It will let the children know their culture.

One Education tutor was ambivalent about the policy because it does not give scope to enough Ghanaian languages. While he would prefer that English be used as MoI throughout the primary school years, he nevertheless calls for the textbooks to be written in the local languages. He commented,

It is the pride of the African family to hear their children speak in the English language.... Unless we write all the textbooks in the system in the various languages, the policy would be meaningless.

One Education tutor echoed college tutors' concern about the ability of primary school teachers to teach the Ghanaian languages effectively. He said, "We should strengthen the capacity of teachers to teach effectively at the lower levels." A language tutor suggested that in addition to the use of the Ghanaian languages as MoI for P1 to P3, they should be made core subjects to be studied up to the university level. It seems to be Ghanaian language teachers' belief that the low prestige attached to their subject could be redeemed by its elevation to higher academic levels. Already several Ghanaian universities have departments where some of the languages are studied as subjects.

The majority of tutors were in favor of Ghanaian languages to be used as MoI for the lower primary because children at the lower primary understand things better in their first languages. They remarked:

At the lower levels the local language is what the children understand and it is therefore the appropriate medium for this level.

Schools being community-based means that the children speak the Ghanaian language so the child understands better [when instruction is] in the [local language].

For upper primary classes the tutors preferred English.

One tutor opted for a blend of the Ghanaian language and English for the lower primary. With qualifications in Educational psychology, this tutor felt that if the Ghanaian language were used exclusively it would affect acquisition of English at this level. The only tutor who preferred the use of English in the lower primary cited the pride that some families take hearing their children speak English. He, too, held Bachelor of Education qualifications in Educational Psychology. Additionally, he was concerned that there were no textbooks in any of the subjects in the Ghanaian languages.

For the upper primary, eight tutors went for English. Their general position is that pupils at this level have sufficient command of English to benefit from lessons taught in English. They said,

This is the time the child is ready mentally to grasp messages taught in the English language. The child will be able to communicate well.

As he grows older he understands English.

At this level, they should start the English language from there to help them communicate with other people.

Two tutors, both first language speakers of Kasem, preferred a bilingual medium combining English and the local language. One of them maintained that “The child here can now translate from Kasem to English so should be taught [in] both English and Kasem.” The other said, “By the time they are at the upper primary they have already formed the concepts, so here mixing English and the Ghanaian language is good.” The one respondent who opted for the use of the local language for upper primary felt that this would “build a strong foundation in the children’s background.”

TTC Students’ Perspectives on the Language Policy

(Note: In this section I divide student attitudes and perceptions into two sections: attitudes toward the language policy and attitudes toward the teaching and learning of languages in college.)

TTC students were divided in their attitudes to the policy. Group ‘A’ students were less favorably disposed to the policy than Group ‘B’ and ‘C’ students. Some students were very much in favor of the policy of using a local medium in teaching lower primary pupils, even if they felt that the policy was restrictive and did not include all languages. Their reasons were mainly pedagogical, such as:

Ghanaian languages are most familiar to pupils and serve as good foundation for the acquisition of better education.

It is necessary because at the lower primary level the best medium is the Ghanaian language which the pupils understand. If you use English they will not understand you.

Some students looked at the issue from their own individual perspectives. One student maintained that if pupils were fluent in both English and the local languages they would help their illiterate parents with the translation and interpretation of English texts:

It is beneficial to pupils who should be able to assist their illiterate parents to understand things in English by helping to translate English into the local languages.

This remark is interesting as it suggests that the student does not understand or sympathize fully with the main objectives of the policy. Of course the illiteracy rate has declined in the communities, although this region is still lagging behind the other regions of Ghana, but it is doubtful that many parents continue to value formal education in these terms.

Some students, while endorsing the policy, called for the inclusion of many more languages. Group 'A' students are most likely to advance this type of argument:

It would have been good if all Ghanaian languages were available at the basic level. However, when it [the Ghanaian language] is introduced to people later, it poses difficulties'.

Here I am learning Dagaare and if I am posted to my district it will be useless because Gurene is spoken there.

Some students objected to the policy requirement that Ghanaian languages be taught as subjects in the primary schools. One Group 'A' student who said that English should be used as MoI throughout primary school said,

It does not help because right now I am studying Dagaare and if posted to the Brong Ahafo Region...Dagaare will be of no use. Hence, it is of no use to study Ghanaian languages in schools."

The student's home district is in a region far from Brong Ahafo but he would like to be posted there. For this type of trainee teacher the policy restricts movement. The respondent's arguments are self-centered; nevertheless, functionality remains a concern among many teacher trainees. The concern is that teachers can be posted to any part of the country and some opt to be posted outside their natal districts and regions. In the respondent's view, local language medium frustrates the teacher who did not speak the particular local language or had been taught to use a different Ghanaian language as MoI. Another Group 'A' student's remarks present another slant to these concerns:

A second look should be given to the Ghanaian languages in the schools because I am a Bulsa but studying Dagaare now and I want to be posted to the Bulsa District. How relevant will Dagaare be to me and the pupils when I go there?

While the questionnaire did not probe this, some students gave comprehensive answers about what obtains at higher levels of schooling. For example, while teacher educators complain about the removal of Ghanaian languages from the list of compulsory courses at the SSS, one student endorsed that

decision. He argued that making Ghanaian languages core subjects disadvantages those students whose first languages are not offered at SSS. He said,

For the primary schools it is in order to teach Ghanaian languages but at the SSS levels it is not, since not everybody who attends a particular SSS will find their language being taught there.

Another student felt that it should be an optional subject in the Teacher Training College but should be included in the list of core subjects for the SSS level.

TTC Students' Perceptions on the Teaching of Ghanaian Languages in College:

Group A Students

Most Group 'A' students were critical of the requirement that all students should study a Ghanaian language in the college. Students who fail the Ghanaian language option examinations are withdrawn from the college. Some reject the requirement outright and others who endorse the policy with reservation. Students said:

It is in good but it starts only at the training college; so we don't have the foundation and write exams in six months.

For those encountering the language of study for the first time, it is not easy on them. The program favors the Kasena and Dagaba.

Having made it clear that the student has mixed feelings on the question the same student goes on to explain thusly:

We do not have a background in Dagaare; however, failure in it means expulsion, even for those of us who are not speakers. On the other hand, learning a Ghanaian language is good. English is a borrowed language.

Pointing out the benefits of the study of the Ghanaian languages in the college, another Group 'A' student says:

In future it will enhance our professional development. However, I have difficulties in learning Dagaare which is new to me.

Attitudes that are very critical of the policy of teaching the Ghanaian languages in the college was exemplified by the following:

We are seriously against the study of Ghanaian languages in the college because it affects us. We have only six months to pass the promotional exams at the end of the year. The time is not enough for people who are taking a new language they had never heard of.

The student is exaggerating here when he says that they had never heard of Dagaare prior to coming to the college. Not only are there cultural ties between the Dagaba ethnic group and some of the ethnic groups in the Region, many Dagaba public servants are to be found working in the Region. In contrast to this 'rejectionist' perspective is the view of this Ewe student (a southern Ghanaian) who remarks, "Due to the educational policy, as a teacher there is need for me to know a northern language."

Group 'B' Students

The students who speak Kasem, the predominant language of the locality, approved of the teaching of the Ghanaian language in college. The view that future primary school teachers require preparation in the Ghanaian language to be effective was widespread among this group. They commented:

It is good because as teachers we may be posted to the lower primaries where we need the local language.

It benefits the teacher trainees who can easily teach the language when posted to such areas.

It is important because we are being trained to go and teach younger ones who don't understand English at that level.

Some Group 'B' students emphasize the cultural component of the training for the individual trainee teacher. This is exemplified by views such as these:

It is good because it helps you to be well versed in the culture of the area.

It is good because it will enlighten us about our culture, because it is through this that we get to know about our culture.

While all Group 'B' students endorsed the teaching of their first language in the college, one or two were sympathetic to the plight of the Group 'A' students. A third year student commented:

The students come from various places and they do not all understand Kasem and Dagaare. For me, it is not a problem but others have a problem using just six months to do the language. In any case, such people who will be posted back to their home areas will find the Ghanaian language studies at college of no use to them.

Most Group 'B' students also endorsed the study of Ghanaian languages in the primary schools. Reasons advanced included the following:

- Establishing continuities between school and homes: "to enable pupils to face school...[and] to enable them to learn properly"
- Gaining an insight into their languages and cultures: 'to know about their own culture and language'.
- To serve as a foundation for language learning: "it is also good to build on the L1 to understand other languages"
- Cultural preservation: "It helps us to preserve our culture and helps us to be fluent in the language"

In sum, students whose first languages are not approved as school subjects felt that any training they received in college in the teaching of any Ghanaian languages that are not their L1s and the use of such as MoI would not serve any purpose because the areas to which they eventually would be posted would not be areas in which any of the current group of approved languages would be spoken.

On the teaching and learning of the Ghanaian language at TTC, one respondent reflected the general position in his remarks:

It is good but most students do not understand the two languages [taught in the college] and it is not fair to them...It is good that the colleges teach the Ghanaian languages. In future it will enhance our professional development. However, personally I have difficulties in learning Dagaare which is new to me.

A few students advocated for local languages to be used all six years of primary education. This group included some students whose L1 was taught in the college and, surprisingly, some students whose L1s were not taught. However, Group 'A' students tended to be more hostile to the policy.

The following can be concluded from the demographic information provided by students:

- If a student's L1 is one of the approved Ghanaian languages the college specializes in, then the student elected to study that language in college; if not, the student selected Dagaare, because it is likely to be linguistically akin to the student's L1 and also he or she would find himself or herself on equal footing with other non-speakers of the language of study.
- If a student's L1 is not taught in the college but is one of the officially sponsored languages, then the student elected to study this language on his or her own. He or she might, however, select one of the languages taught in the college and attend the classes.
- If a student's L1 is not officially sponsored then a student is unlikely to be literate in it unless he was taken extra trouble to study it extra-murally.
- Since many Group 'A' students are able to complete the course, some meaningful preparation goes on in classes where the students do not speak the language being offered. First year students,

however, are usually apprehensive and it is possible that some students withdraw from college for failing the language examinations. The College authorities on the whole are sympathetic to their plight.

The number of Group 'C' students was very small so that no clear patterns could be detected from their responses.

AVAILABILITY OF TEXTBOOKS AND TEACHING MATERIALS

All students agreed that textbooks for the teaching and learning of the Ghanaian languages at the TTC were nonexistent. The items that were mentioned as learning materials included a play written by one of the Kasem language teachers that has been published, and some supplementary readers in the Kasem language that are kept in the library. Students were aware of no other materials. Some students mentioned the Ghanaian language syllabus as the only material available to them for teaching and learning the languages. The pedantic question on availability of college textbooks written in the Ghanaian languages drew a negative response here as in other colleges visited for some other sites. What obtains in this college reflects the general picture in Ghanaian training colleges.

When asked if students were taught to develop their own materials for teaching and learning the Ghanaian languages, some suggested using cardboards, pictures, and real objects obtained from the locality. However, the development of these materials was not tailored specifically to the teaching of the Ghanaian languages but to all subjects. For that reason, some respondents gave a negative response to the question. A second-year student remarked:

So far we have done content work such as the vowels of the language and this was in the first year. In the second year we did curriculum studies and how to assist pupils in the schools.

The general conclusion seems to be that the college is doing nothing specifically towards the teaching of Ghanaian languages in the college or at the primary school and the use of these languages as media of instruction in primary schools.

LESSONS AND MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION

Most students said they enjoyed the lessons taught but a few were dissatisfied. A third year Group 'B' student commented that "Kasem is my own language and I understand more perfectly (sic) what goes on." Another student enjoyed the lessons, "because topics like stories and the learning of traditions are very interesting."

One of the few dissatisfied students commented that they [he and others in the class] feel it is a boring language, and reading it is difficult. A remark like this is an honest one and reflects the difficult nature of the writing orthographic conventions found in most Ghanaian languages. A pastor recently noted

that he read Biblical passages in English first to be able to understand and present them in the local language—and he was referring to a language with over 150 years of literacy traditions.

If a few Group ‘B’ students have reason for dissatisfaction, Group ‘A’ seemed to have an even greater bone of contention as they did not understand the languages that they were learning in the college, as these responses to the question if they enjoyed the lessons indicate:

No, because some of us are not native speakers.

No, because the examinable Ghanaian languages here are not my native languages, so I don’t have the basis. Also at my age, it is very difficult to learn these languages.

No, because the Ghanaian language is not my mother tongue I don’t enjoy it. But I would have liked it if it were my mother tongue.

These comments show that there was some good will among some Group ‘A’ students for the languages they have selected for study in the college. Between Dagaba people and Gurune people there is a traditional inter-ethnic joking relationship that probably accounts for some of this good will between the two groups. Therefore, some Gurune students would not have minded taking Dagaare if they understood it and spoke it well enough. The two languages are related linguistically, although the relationship is not as close as to make the two mutually intelligible. Here are some illustrative comments from Group ‘A’ students.

Unlike English, which we are familiar with, we don’t understand Dagaare and do not enjoy it as much as English, although the Dagaba people are our playmates.

I like the Dagaare language but I cannot read and understand the language the way I would understands English. I am compelled to “chew.”

Students “chew” or commit to memory what they do not understand for the sake of passing examinations.

Lessons researchers observed show that language tutors endeavor to incorporate methodology in their teaching. It was the tutors’ practice to relate the topics discussed in a lesson to the various levels at which those topics might be taught. None of the lessons observed were aimed at the lower primary teaching per se. The methodologies also took account of the teaching requirements for the JSS levels. Unfortunately, researchers observed too few lessons as the college was winding up for the term at the time of the visit.

The MoI in the case of one of the language classes was the same as the language itself. This was possible because the students were first language speakers; however, even here English was sometimes used. The following comment made by a final year Group 'B' student reflects the variegated patterns of medium choices:

In PS1, Kasem was the medium of instruction but in PS2 English was used because it was possible to answer the examination questions in English or Kasem. Now, Kasem is the Medium of Instruction because the examination will be written in Kasem.

For some students, English had to be used side by side with the Ghanaian language because of 'untranslatable' terms and concepts. A third year student remarked,

There are certain words for which there are no Kasem equivalents, so English is used. For example, 'consonant' is *konsonante*'.

What the student is referring to in this comment is not the same as use of bilingual instructional medium but attempts made to phonologize English terms and concepts that do not have equivalents in the Ghanaian languages. This is a perfectly acceptable practice.

Group 'A' students and those from outside the northern Regions were taught in the English medium as these students did not really speak the languages they had selected. This is clear from the comments of students:

Normally, the teacher explains Dagaare in English for non-speakers to understand.

The tutor uses English mostly. Most of us are of different linguistic backgrounds and if tutor spoke only in Dagaare most of us would not understand.

Dagaare serves as the written medium but a little English is introduced to enable us follow the lesson.

The last Group 'A' female first year student's remark seems to allude to the practice whereby the tutor writes the exercises and examples in Dagaare and then explains in English. This was actually observed at a lesson taught in the college.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Variables such as age, year, group, and sex do not seem to influence perceptions among the students and tutors interviewed. While it is not clear in the case of tutors whether subject of specialization

influences attitudes, Ghanaian language tutors hold strong views on the need to take the subject seriously. In the case of students, ethnic and linguistic background was a relevant factor in the generation of perspectives on the Ghanaian languages. Generally, students were not opposed to the study of Ghanaian languages and most appreciate the pedagogical benefits of using the Ghanaian languages as media of instruction and their study as subjects in schools. Generally they appreciated that teacher preparation should include Ghanaian language studies. It is, therefore, in order that the college should teach the Ghanaian languages. There was, however, some resentment among students whose first languages are not being taught in schools and are not being taught in the college. Students whose first languages are being taught in the colleges were well disposed towards the program.

The college did not provide incentives for the teaching and study of the Ghanaian languages that it offers or for their use as media of instruction. This may be due to a lack of awareness that use of a language as instructional medium requires some training and preparation and that mere spoken or written competence in that language may not be enough. Given the lack of materials to teach the languages and to prepare teachers to use them in the primary schools, students needed to be equipped with the knowledge to improvise subject-specific materials for the Ghanaian languages.

What obtains in this college is not too different from what was observed at another college, Erokosa TTC in a different part of the country. Lessons derived at one site might be useful for another. The teaching of Ghanaian languages at the TTCs and the preparation of students at this level need to be reinforced, if the official policy is to be implemented in the ways envisaged by the architects of that policy. To begin with, there is the need to create more teacher training colleges and each District should have at least one. Second, colleges should recruit students who speak the languages that the colleges teach. There is no reason why the colleges could not teach several languages spoken in their catchment areas rather than the present practice of selecting just one or two. Currently, contact hour requirements prevent the employment of several language tutors in one college. The government should also consider increasing the number of languages approved for study in the school system. Large language communities speak languages such as Gurene, Sisala, Kusaal, and Buli and the languages happen to have been developed already and equipped with orthographies by NGOs like the Ghana Institute of Linguistics, Literacy, and Bible Translation (GILLBT) which has also sponsored the authorship of basic literacy materials in these and in many other northern Ghanaian languages. Such items should be useable in the training of lower level teachers. There is also concern that students who did not study Ghanaian languages at the SSS level now have to take examinations in these languages and pass the examinations within six months. It might help if either Ghanaian language became a compulsory subject at the SSS level or a pass in SSS level Ghanaian language is made a requirement for entry into the teacher training colleges. The haste with which the Ghanaian languages are examined externally should be reconsidered so that students are given enough time to study the languages before taking the external examination.

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Chapter Five: Nantwi School

BY

FIIFI MENSAH

University of Cape Coast

COMMUNITY PROFILE

Nantwi, a community with a population of about 500, is located in the Greater Accra Region. Farming and animal husbandry form the two major occupations and economic activities of the community. It is a settler community--an area to which people from different parts of the country have migrated and settled--with hamlets dotted all over the area. The main ethnic group is Ewe. Fulani forms the minor ethnic group. Dangme and Ewe are the main languages spoken in the area.

The only educational institution that serves the entire community is the primary school situated in the middle of the community. The only amenities in the community are pipe-borne water, which serves the whole community, and a dam, which provides a source of drinking water for the cattle. The vegetation is savanna and the crops grown are mainly yam, maize, and groundnuts. The land is clay, and the surface becomes slippery during rains. As a result, the community is inaccessible by vehicle whenever it rains.

SCHOOL PROFILE

Nantwi Primary School is a public school that has a population of 72 boys and 52 girls. The school has two classroom blocks with mud walls. The first one contains Primary Class One (P1), P4, and P6 classrooms. It is roofed with asbestos roofing sheets and has windows and doors without shutters. The second block contains P2, P3, and P5 classrooms. It has dwarf walls about one meter high and is roofed with thatch.

The school has two urinals--one for females and one for males--that are used by pupils and teachers alike. Another latrine is under construction and members of the community are building a new classroom block with offices with USAID assistance. Because of incessant disturbances by cattle, the school compound has been fenced with barbed wires to prevent the cattle from entering the compound.

One-third of the Nantwi School's pupils (38) are in P1, due in part to a high rate of repetition at this level (five boys and four girls are repeating P1), and this due in part to the school's English-only

language policy. This pattern also holds for P6 with 25 students where nine pupils are also repeating, four boys and five girls. P2 through P5 have 12 to 19 pupils per class.

ATTITUDES AND PERCEPTIONS OF LANGUAGE POLICY AND LANGUAGE USE

Community

In Nantwi, in addition to the parents interviewed, researchers interviewed four community members, three men and one woman. Initially only men presented themselves for the interviews, but the researchers also wanted to hear from women from the community, so they requested that at least one woman be added to the interviewees. This woman happened to be the chief's wife, and a member of the School Management Committee (SMC). The three men were the chief of Nantwi, the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) chairman, and the SMC chairman. All were farmers and three had no formal education. The one with formal education, the SMC chairman, had reached the level of City and Guilds Joinery² (i.e., woodwork and carpentry).

With regard to Medium of Instruction (MoI) in schools, the chief and his wife preferred that Dangme be used in lower primary and English in upper primary. However, the PTA and SMC chairmen preferred that English be used for both lower and upper primary. That is, they supported the status quo of early English medium set by the Nantwi headteacher.

Parents

Researchers interviewed 11 parents and five guardians, six men and 10 women. Males ranged in age from 24 to 48 years; females from 18 to 50 years. Twelve of the parents or guardians were farmers; the rest were herdsman, traders, or managed the households (housewives). One 18-year-old girl who had just finished JSS represented her mother.

The diversity of the settler area is highlighted in the number of languages spoken by the 16 parents and guardians. Three were literate in English and Dangme, two were literate in only Dangme and one was literate only in Ewe. In a few households Twi, Fulani, or Hausa were spoken. Fulani was the first language for three parents, Ewe for seven, and Dangme for six. Thirteen parents or guardians had no formal education. Of the remaining three, one was a P6 leaver, one a Middle Form Two leaver, and one was a Middle Form Four leaver (the highest level of education represented).

On average, there were four children per family with a range of one to seven children. The majority of parents or guardians had enrolled all the children of school-going age in their household in school. However, one parent with four children had enrolled only two in school; another parent with four children had enrolled three out of four; and another parent with two children had not enrolled one of the two in school. The age range of the children at home was 5 to 15 years old.

In the first round of data collection all 16 parents and guardians said they preferred that in primary school the children should be taught in English. They gave the following reasons:

If they don't understand English, they can't operate in future.

It is the key language, he will work with it in future.

They can go places with English.

I would like them to learn the English language so that in future they will get good jobs and look after me.

In the second round of data collection at Nantwi in May 2000, researchers interviewed the parents again, in focus groups of women and men, instead of individually. The results were strikingly different. Nine out of ten mothers and several fathers voiced their support for mother tongue education and said it was important for their children to study the Ghanaian language in order to get a job in mass media, to read letters, and to know their own language. When asked why they gave different answers this time, the parents and guardians stated that before they had not known about the policy and that the school had recently hired a teacher who spoke Dangme and could now use the language with the pupils. One father still vociferously supported early English medium, stating that a truly educated person was one who knew English and had forgotten his or her local language.

With regard to children's attitudes towards the use of Ghanaian language at home, all 16 parents and guardians said that the children speak mainly the local languages at home and like it, but occasionally they also try to speak English.

Teachers

The teachers were not using Ghanaian language as MoI for two reasons. First, none of the teachers in the school were able to speak the local language fluently. (They belong to different ethnic/language groups from those of the children.) Second, the teachers themselves did not support the national school language policy. They felt the policy was not good and that English should be used from P1 to P4--even though they agreed that pupils, especially those in P1, understand better when they are taught in the local language.

Pupils

Researchers interviewed and observed four P1 pupils. Two said they prefer to use Dangme to ask or answer questions in class because they cannot speak English. Another pupil prefers Dangme but does not know why. The fourth pupil prefers to use Ewe because she cannot understand Dangme or

English. Three P1 pupils prefer that the teacher use English to teach Mathematics, however, because they all “feel good” when the teacher uses English to teach and they feel that they can know English better.

All P2 to P4 pupils observed and interviewed said they prefer asking or answering questions in English. They also prefer that the teacher teach all the subjects in English. They gave these reasons:

I want to learn English better.

I understand it better in English.

I feel happy when lesson is taught in English.

Supervisors

First round interviews with the head teacher, the teachers, and the circuit supervisor showed that they are aware of the language policy--but none of them had a copy of the policy in their offices. Furthermore, they do not think the policy is a good one and they do not support it. In this setting, the teachers and the supervisors do not support the national language policy and the teachers were allowed to adopt a different school language policy for P1 through P3 in primary school. The school also is not teaching Ghanaian Language as a subject at any level and, thus, also is not implementing that section of the language policy. There are no sanctions for being at variance with the policy.

LANGUAGE USE INSIDE AND OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM

Parents report that when they visit the school, they observe teachers using English language to teach the pupils. The pupils also confirmed this. One P2 pupil stated, “The teacher said we should not speak vernacular in class.” Teachers explain that they cannot speak the local language and so they use English to teach. The P1 teacher is learning Dangme and observations confirmed that she occasionally uses Dangme in the classroom.

In P1 class the pupils use Dangme to communicate with their friends. From P2 through P4, however, the pupils use a mixture of Dangme and English. When communicating with the teacher, they try to speak English.

Teachers encourage pupils to speak English in class and, as noted above, may also discourage the use of Ghanaian language. However, during break time pupils use a mixture of English, Dangme, and sometimes Ewe to interact with other pupils. They talk mostly about food, games, and homework, and sometimes they discuss learning materials they use in class.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Researchers observed the P1 teacher in English, Environmental Studies, Mathematics and Religious and Moral Education (RME). Her teaching methods included questions and answers with groups and involving pupils actively in the class activities. Her MoI was English with occasional use of Dangme. The P1 teacher said, “I have to try very hard to learn the local language so that I can communicate with P1 pupils because they cannot understand the English language well in class.” She said that in general boys answer more questions than girls, but the P1 pupils do not normally ask questions in class. The statement was confirmed by class observations.

Researchers observed the P2 teacher in English, Environmental Studies, Mathematics and RME. He used English to ask questions and answers of groups and also engaged pupils to participate actively in the lessons. In one or two cases he spoke Dangme. During break time he interacted with the pupils in English. P2 girls answered questions much more frequently than the boys. However, both boys and girls asked questions almost at equal levels in class.

The P3 teacher was observed in English, Environmental Studies, and Mathematics. During English lessons, he distributed textbooks to pupils and asked them to read silently. He then engaged the pupils in activities in which they participated actively. With the other subjects he used questions and answers with groups. His interactions with the pupils were in English, even during break time. He never attempted to explain any concept in class in a local language. In P3, boys answered and asked questions more often than girls.

Researchers observed the P4 teacher in English, Environmental Studies, and Mathematics. His teaching method consisted of asking individual pupils questions and answers in English medium. The teacher reported that boys answered questions 60 - 65% of the time while the girls answered 40 - 45%. Researchers’ classroom observations and field notes did not support this. We observed girls answer questions more often than the boys. In fact, the girls also asked questions more frequently than the boys.

The P4 teacher was very harsh, especially to the boys. He shouted at pupils whenever they got an answer wrong. In a Mathematics lesson the teacher was furious at a boy who could not solve a problem which was easily solved by a girl. He said, “even a girl has solved it and you cannot. You are hopeless.” In this he insulted both the girls and the boy: the girls, by implying that they could not be expected to solve the problem easily, and the boy by directly calling him “hopeless.” This kind of teacher-pupil interaction has a direct bearing on girls’ and boys’ willingness to talk in class and to use English, the language in which the language policy expects pupils to be fluent at this level.

It should also be noted again that not only is Ghanaian language not used as MoI in this school, but it is also not being taught as a subject. Hence, students from Nantwi who continue on to JSS are at a

disadvantage in studying Ghanaian language since in JSS it is a required subject and these children have had no exposure to it in primary school.

MATERIALS

As at other sites, there were no RME books in P1 through P4. P1 had 10 Ghanaian language books, but the books were not being used. P4 lacked books for Ghanaian Language and Environmental Studies. P1 had a total of 80 books for 37 pupils, a ratio of about two books for every pupil. P2 and P3 had a 2:1 ratio of books in English and Mathematics. Although P4 had no books on Ghanaian Language or RME, an average of four books (for three subjects--Mathematics, English, and Integrated Sciences) were available to each pupil. Other teaching materials available for P1 were picture books, work books, and 'shapes' bottle tops. In P2 there were flash cards and counters. In the other classes there were no other materials apart from the books mentioned above.

SHARING RESEARCH FINDINGS WITH THE COMMUNITY

The purpose of the community meeting was to share the findings of the research study, one of the built-in strategies of the Improving Educational Quality project.

The meeting at Nantwi was held on Thursday May 31, 2001 at Nantwi Primary School. Even though it was a market day the attendance was very encouraging, since the previous day the pupils had been asked to inform their parents and the elders to attend the meeting. At the start of the meeting about 25 community members were present; by the meeting's end there were 32. After introducing the IEQ2 research team, researchers explained the purpose of the meeting and discussed the main findings across sites. Parents were given time to ask questions and also air their views about the findings.

All community members except one agreed that there were benefits to be derived from the policy. They said, for example,

Then [if Ghanaian language is MoI] there will be proper understanding between teachers and pupils and among the pupils themselves.

It would be shameful for one to be able to read letters written English but unable to read letters written in the mother tongue.

They expressed one concern, however:

If the government does not enforce the implementation of the policy at the private schools, then those schools implementing the policy would be at a disadvantage.

Their rationale was that pupils in private schools would then acquire English proficiency earlier and better than those schools implementing the policy. The researchers also shared this sentiment.

The only man who disagreed with the policy said he was aware that non-implementing private schools perform better than those implementation schools in national examination and quizzes. He argued that this is so because they use English from P1 onwards and that the schools implementing the policy do not profit from the use of the Ghanaian language as MoI instruction and as subject.

The research team then explained to the community members some of the reasons attributable to the differences that they encountered in their research. This included the support private school pupils receive at home, their socio-economic background that influences their school work (e.g., parents' readiness and ability to buy books and other things for their children in private schools when the materials supplied by the government are not adequate). The community members appealed to the government to provide materials equally to schools so that no one would be disadvantaged. Curiously this was a QUIPS schools where sufficient textbooks were available--but not always in use. During the second data collection visit when a researcher inquired why the pupil:textbook ratio for P1 Mathematics was 3:1, the teacher stated that she was saving some of the new books for when the older ones were damaged or lost. The next day she distributed more textbooks so the ratio was 2:1 or lower.

Another important issue raised was why the government posts teachers to schools where they cannot speak the language of the pupils. Here also the community members appealed to the government to be circumspect when posting teachers to schools.

After informing members about a national forum being planned to disseminate findings of the research, the team thanked members for attending the meeting. The meeting came to a close at about 10.00 a.m.

CONCLUSIONS AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Many inferences can be drawn from the results of the study. However, the most pertinent findings of the research can be formulated briefly as follows:

Observing teachers and pupils in classrooms revealed important information about the language policy implementation. All the teachers in Nantwi Primary School come from language backgrounds different from the pupils and so are not fluent in the local language of the area. English was therefore used as MoI from P1 to P4. This raises questions about the posting of teachers. If there are no teachers posted to a school who speak the predominant language of the area, it is impossible for the school to implement the language policy.

In the classroom, most pupils tried to speak English, albeit with difficulty. Outside the classroom, the pupils used local languages to communicate among themselves, an indication that the pupils were more comfortable with their local languages. Observing the pupils outside also revealed that pupils use the languages from their different language groups.

Interviews with the chief, SMC chairman, PTA chairman, and other community members reveal that they are not aware of the language policy. Several of them prefer English as MoI, and they believe that English will help the pupils in future but that Ghanaian language will not. However, the chief and an SMC member (the chief's wife) believe that local language should be used in the lower classes.

Interviews with parents and with pupils in P2 through P4 indicated that they preferred English MoI to Ghanaian language. However, P1 pupils preferred Dangme MoI (three out of four pupils) or Ewe (the fourth pupil) and liked learning Mathematics in English. The P2 through P4 pupils and parents believed that using English would help the pupils acquire better skills in speaking English and that this would help them in future life. None of the parents has had any formal education.

There were no textbooks in P2 through P4 Ghanaian Language classes. The 10 Ghanaian Language books in P1 were not being used. There were no textbooks in RME in any of the classes. There were enough English and Mathematics books for P1 through P3. P4 had enough of all the books except Ghanaian Language. Other materials available for teaching were bottle tops and flash cards. If the school language policy is to be implemented, more resources must be made available to pupils.

One significant fact that must not be overlooked by policy-makers is what is going on at the level of implementation. Successful implementation requires the following:

Parents, teachers and community members need to be educated about the importance and benefits that can be accrued if the policy is implemented without hindrance. The pupils themselves also need to be educated on this issue.

The TTCs in the area need to be equipped to teach teachers to use Ghanaian languages, both content and methodology. Regular in-service training must be organized for practicing teachers on the use of Ghanaian language and English as MoI. Also, practicing teachers need to have the appropriate training, resources and supervision so they can speak and teach well using the prevalent language of the area.

The pivotal role of the district in facilitating a strong teaching and learning environment needs to receive increased attention. This is especially important in the policy and practice of teacher assignments and transfers and of teacher supervision.

Additional research should be undertaken to explore questions and concerns raised in this report, especially dealing with children and teachers in one school who speak different mutually unintelligible languages. The above study provides useful information which suggests that multilingualism and dealing with children and teachers in one school who speak different, mutually unintelligible languages is not solely an urban problem as has been previously thought. This situation makes the language policy implementation very difficult.

The data highlighted that almost all members of the community, including the teachers, did not favor the language policy until they learned more about it. In addition to other reasons for these attitudes, this suggests that individuals may not know the rationale or research behind the policy, and that educating the community is critical.

Chapter Six:

Medofo School and Aseret Teacher Training College

BY

ERIC MAGNUS WILMOT

University of Cape Coast

Sicnarf Teacher Training College

BY

FIIFI MENSAH

University of Cape Coast

MEDOFO SCHOOL

The Medofo Primary School was selected, in part, because it was likely to be “over-implementing” the language policy in a homogeneous setting, that is, all pupils and teachers would be native speakers of the language used as the medium of instruction (MoI) in Primary Class One through Three (P1 through P3). The school was not one of the three district schools selected to participate in the QUIPS project.

COMMUNITY PROFILE

Medofo is a nucleated settlement in the Volta Region of Ghana. The Medofo school community comprises three towns almost joined together along two intersecting untarred roads. The main ethnic groups are Ewes and Akans; Ewe is the main language for interaction in the community. It is the language of the town, the district, and the market. The approximately 2,000 inhabitants of the town are predominantly farmers, although some engage in petty trading as well.

SCHOOL PROFILE

Medofo Roman Catholic Primary School is a public school that serves the greater Medofo community. It has two streams of single shift type with 12 classrooms. Six of these are in bamboo-fenced structures roofed with aluminum sheets and located adjacent to the head teacher's bungalow. The floors of these classrooms are not cemented; they are dirt. Another set of three classrooms is located in a pavilion roofed with aluminum sheets without sidewalls. Only three upper grade classrooms of the "B" stream are housed in a block built with cement and fitted with windows and doors. The head teacher's office and the school's storeroom are at one end of this block. Near the office end of this block is another bamboo-fenced building used as Kindergarten, P1, and P2 classrooms. The head teacher's bungalow, a cement blockhouse built with World Bank funds, is also located on the school compound and fenced with bamboo.

The Medofo Primary School has a urinal each for boys and girls. There is a borehole nearby which serves as a source of drinking water for both the town and the school. The compound has grass and several trees and shrubs that provide shade. The school shares a common football field with the junior secondary school located in between the primary and junior secondary schools.

At the time of the team's first visit, the school had a full complement of 12 trained teachers and a detached (non-teaching) head teacher. In addition, two supporting women were in charge of the kindergarten. The school enrolled 257 pupils for the 1999/2000 academic year, 135 girls and 122 boys. The same pattern was observed in the kindergarten, with 51 girls and 43 boys. Only one girl and one boy transferred from the school during the 1998/99 academic year. There were no dropouts. Like the community, the language for interaction in the school among both teachers and pupils was Ewe. This was also the predominant language of instruction, although it was mixed with English.

ATTITUDES AND PERCEPTIONS OF LANGUAGE POLICY AND LANGUAGE USE

Community

When the community members turned up for the interviews at Medofo, only men appeared (School Management Committee member, Secretary, Unit Committee Chairman, the Paramount Chief and P.T.A Chairman). Arrangement was made, therefore, for four extra members to come the next day to be interviewed. Three women and the Catholic Priest, who happens to be the local manager of the school, came to be interviewed. Thus, in the end eight people were interviewed, five men and three women. Apart from the Chief who was 72 years old and one SMC member who was 20 years old, the rest were between 38 and 51.

Only one of them is unemployed, the 20-year-old School Management Committee (SMC) member who had just completed Senior Secondary School (SSS). The others are a teacher, a trader, a carpenter, an orderly, a farmer, a chief and a priest. However, from the community profile and informal

discussion with inhabitants, it became clear that the predominant occupation of the Medofo Community is farming and petty trading. The educational level of the community members interviewed ranged from middle form four, the terminating level of Ghana's pre-secondary school system (five were in this category), through SSS to Diploma. The number of children in the household ranged from zero to ten. There is an average of two primary aged children at school from the household of those interviewed.

Of the eight community members interviewed, only the PTA Chairman was aware of the government's language policy for education. However, all had an opinion about the school's MoI. Five community members think that English should be used as MoI at the lower primary. One prefers that Ewe be used for explanation when English is the MoI; one thinks a mixture of Ewe and English should be used. Two individuals of stature, the Chief and the Queen Mother, prefer the use of Ewe as the MoI. The Chief, for instance, remarked after his interview,

. . .at the lower primary the local language should be emphasized [as a medium of instruction]. When you learn a foreign language you have to translate it into your first language in your mind to be able to understand. Out of [my] experience as a teacher, children being taught in both get confused.

Parents

The majority of parents (14 out of 16) prefer that English be used as the MoI in the lower primary. Their reasons were varied:

I prefer English because with it you can go everywhere and have no problems.

English is an international language. It will therefore be easier for the child to communicate well even if he travels outside.

[I prefer English] so that I can learn from the child.

Three parents felt that the use of English would make the children learn faster and better. "If a child is started in English she would build on it" was one the responses received in this direction.

One parent feels that English is the purpose of school:

English, to me, is the basis for determining whether a child has benefited from the school or not. What is more, they can read. They have more books in English than Ewe.

Only two parents wanted both English and Ewe to be used. In their opinion, if both languages are used then “the child can speak both languages well.” No parent indicated a preference for the use of Ghanaian language only.

Teachers

With the exception of the P2 teacher none of the four teachers interviewed had any idea about the language policy. The P2 teacher is also the only one who has a positive attitude towards the policy and feels that it should be maintained. The rest have a negative attitude towards the policy and said that, given the opportunity, they would advocate for English MoI.

The P4 teacher, for instance, said she did not enjoy using Ghanaian language in P4 because “it is not useful.” According to her, she is compelled to use Ghanaian language at times because when she uses English the pupils do not understand. Observations conducted in her classroom confirmed this. The P1 teacher feels that the use of English MoI “will enable children to interact with children from other parts of the country. This will also help them understand news and other government issues.”

Pupils

Four pupils, two boys and two girls, were selected at random from each P1 to P4 class. They were interviewed in and out of the classroom while in school. Their parents or guardians and teachers were also interviewed.

With the exception of two, a Kotokoli boy and an Akan (Twi) girl in P2, all the rest were Ewes. They all speak Ewe in class with their classmates. Seven of them said they stayed with their mother, five indicated that they stayed with both parents and four with their grandmothers. However, when their parents were invited for the interview, twelve women, including five grandmothers, and four fathers attended.

A majority of the pupils--14 out of 16--said they prefer subjects like Mathematics and Environmental Studies to be taught in Ewe because then they understand it. The two pupils who prefer these subjects be taught in English say it is because they want to be proficient in English.

Also, most of the pupils (10 out of 16) said they prefer to use Ghanaian language when asking or answering questions in class because they could not speak English. Of the remaining pupils, three (one each in P2, P3 and P4) said they preferred to use English in asking or answering questions in class. The reason for this according to the P2 and P3 pupils is that they want to learn to speak English. The P4 pupil in this category said he wants to speak it to prove that he knows it. The last pupil preferred to use both Ewe and English because she is “not well-grounded in English.”

Classroom observations revealed that more pupils participate in lessons when they are taught in Ewe. They ask more questions when the medium of instruction is Ewe. They also interact with each other mainly in Ewe both in and out of classroom.

Supervisors

The Circuit Supervisor taught for 11 years and has been a Circuit Supervisor for two years. He is literate in Akan (Twi) and English and can speak Hausa. He supervises 21 schools. He is aware of the government's language policy and is able to explain what it says. Although he has no document on it in his office he says he meets with teachers to discuss it as a way of helping in its implementation. If he finds teachers not using the prescribed language for instruction, he says, "First I advise them on the harm they are doing to the pupil. If it continues, I warn and threaten sanctions against him/her." He is, however, personally opposed to the policy. He feels that the language policy is "the cause of the poor English usage in the schools, because it is difficult for pupils to switch over to English even when it is needed. Consequently both teachers and parents are affected."

The Assistant Director (AD) in charge of Supervision taught for 32 years and has been an AD in the district for seven years. He is literate in Ewe and English and can speak Twi. He is aware of the government's language policy and can say exactly what it says, but he does not have a document on it in his office either. He says that to promote implementation, "At workshops we hammer the use of the mother tongue. The Circuit Supervisors also do this in their rounds of regular school visits. They are told by us to make sure the appropriate language is at the appropriate time." According to the AD, if he finds any teacher not using the prescribed language for instruction he "reprimands them or reminds them of the need to use the correct language at the correct time." He feels the language policy is a good idea, but personally he is pro-English language usage at all levels. "It is a good idea," he said, "If it [English] is used regularly as in the North, the children will improve. When we go to teach in the North, because we cannot speak the local language we teach in English, and the children are forced to learn."

LANGUAGE USE INSIDE AND OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM

In P1 through P3 the MoI was mainly Ewe for all subjects except Mathematics and English. Mathematics and English language lessons were taught predominantly in English with code switching into Ewe to provide explanations, give directions and reprimand pupils. However, P2 Mathematics was taught predominantly in Ewe with code switching into English (English being used for the concepts in Mathematics and for giving exercises). In P4, English was the MoI, with code switching into Ewe as in the lower classes.

Despite three out of four teachers' opinions that English should be the MoI, all the teachers agreed that pupils understand better and respond better when Ghanaian language is used as the MoI. Classroom observations confirmed that pupils enjoyed lessons better and participated more when

lessons were taught in Ewe. Similar reactions were observed even when instruction was in English and teachers then switched into Ewe.

Both in and out of class, pupils interacted among themselves and with their teachers mostly in Ewe. However, they occasionally asked questions or responded to some of their teachers' questions in English when the MoI is English. The pupils said they speak Ewe at home. Their parents confirmed this in their interviews.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

The P1 teacher generally used question and answer method in teaching with few variations depending on the subject. In an English lesson on picture reading, she employed this method and code switched between English and Ewe. English was the primary MoI; and she used Ewe for providing explanations and word clarifications, to name of objects, and to reprimand pupils.

In the P1 Ghanaian Language lesson the teacher used the model reading method as well as choral class repetition for introducing key words. She taught Environmental Studies and Religious and Moral Education entirely in Ewe using the question-and-answer method. In teaching Mathematics, she used a mixture of Ewe and English in a predominantly lecture approach.

The P2 English lesson researchers observed was taught mostly in English and was characterized by choral class repetition. The teacher went through the key words with the class, having them pronounce each word in chorus after her and then individually. She explained these key words in a mixture of English and Ewe. Then she read a passage line by line and pupils repeated in chorus after her. In the Ghanaian language lesson the teacher also used choral repetition to present key words to small groups, individuals, and the whole class. Then she provided model reading. The entire lesson was in Ewe.

In the P3 English lesson, a the teacher selected a reading based on the passage “The Little Black Cat” in Unit One of the textbook. English was the MoI and occasionally the teacher used Ewe to inquire about absentees and to give directions. She provided model reading and invited individual pupils to read after her; then she asked comprehension questions orally and wrote the correct responses on the chalkboard for the class to copy in their exercise books. At the beginning of a P3 Ghanaian language lesson on nouns pupils were asked to read some words after the teacher. Apart from this, the question-and-answer method was mainly used. Even when pupils answered questions in English, the teacher reminded them to use Ewe. However, when the teacher invited the class to praise a pupil, she spoke in English (e.g., “clap for her”).

The P3 Mathematics lesson was presented mostly in English with code switching into Ewe. The teacher used Ewe for explanations, to repeat questions that pupils did not understand in English, and to direct pupils to do exercises in their books.

In a P4 English reading and comprehension lesson, the teacher used model reading to help pupils read a two-paragraph passage entitled, “The Hawk and the Hen,” from Unit One of the P4 textbook. First she read, then she asked pupils to read after her in chorus. This process continued until she asked individual pupils to take turns to read. After that she translated the passage into Ewe when no pupils volunteered to do so. Later she asked the class to read again in chorus and then in small groups before reviewing a few comprehension questions with the class orally. The teacher said during her interview that she assigns exercises in English for all subjects except for Ghanaian language where she uses Ewe. Classroom observations confirmed this as well.

The Ghanaian language lesson in P4 was delivered solely in Ewe. It was a reading lesson on a passage with title “Nanke mele Kuvia wÉwÉ me o” which literally means “There is nothing to gain from laziness”. The lesson started with pronunciation drill. Teacher pronounced “sika, Akpene, Sukuviwo, nkeke, nufiala” and other words, and pupils repeated after her. The teacher then gave a model reading of the passage sentence by sentence and pupils read after her. The story was about a village called Atando where all the citizens are lazy. The footpaths leading to their farms and stream were bushy. The story was written on the chalkboard. After the model reading, pupils read on their own, and then answered a few comprehension questions. Practice exercises were sentences with blank spaces based on the passage where pupils were made to fill in the blank spaces in their exercise books.

MATERIALS

Generally, the amount of materials at Medofo School is inadequate. For the classes observed, the overall average ratio of textbooks to pupils is approximately the following: English and Ghanaian Language (supplementary readers) 1:2, and Mathematics 1:3. P1 through P3 classes do not have Environmental Studies textbooks; only P4 has 16 Environmental Studies textbooks for the 24 pupils. There are no textbooks for Religious and Moral Education in any of the P1 to P4 classes selected. As a result, pupils are not given any textbooks to take home.

SHARING THE RESEARCH FINDINGS WITH THE COMMUNITY

As part of the IEQ process where assessment information is shared with the stakeholders for their use, and as part of good qualitative research that shares information with the informants, community meetings were held with the various communities to share aspects of the findings of the research. This was held during the week that the second assessment in the schools was conducted.

At Medofo this meeting was held on Thursday, May 31, 2001. The meeting was intentionally planned for that day since there was a funeral in town, most inhabitants did not leave for their daily routines, and a greater number would attend the meeting with researchers. The meeting lasted about two hours, from about 2 p.m. to about 4 p.m., and had to be held at the old Roman Catholic Church house instead of the original P6 classroom venue, due to the impressive attendance.

The meeting got underway with about 60 community members and ended with over 80 people. It commenced with the introduction of the IEQ 2 research team members and the opinion leaders of the community present by the head teachers. Next, members were informed about the purpose of the meeting and this was followed by a brief overview of the IEQ2 research and the main findings across sites with occasional reference to the Medofo site. After this presentation members were allowed to ask questions and show their agreement or otherwise of the findings. The issues raised came in a cyclic manner returning to the benefits to be derived in implementing the language policy every now and then.

The first issue raised was the rationale behind the policy and the benefits of implementing a policy like this in schools. Views expressed in support of the policy by a majority of the community members included the potential of the policy, when implemented well, to foster understanding among the lower primary pupils and thereby get them to be well adjusted to the school environment. Others also said it would get the pupils to realize the importance of their native languages. After some amount of deliberation on this a member emphasized what they saw as the apparent disadvantages the children at the Medofo School have due to the lack of enforcement of the policy. She argued that if some schools, especially the private ones, were allowed to start teaching in English right from P1 and the textbooks and examinations would continue to be in English even at the lower primary, then it would be very difficult for their children to catch up with them after P3 when they all enter an all English medium. She felt that it is this state of affairs that has led to higher performance in the private schools. The research team members shared their view about the long-term benefit of the initial Ghanaian language medium to the learning of a new language. The findings of the Ife Project in Nigeria were cited in support and used to assure the group that if the implementation were done well, which they hoped to stress in their final report, then their children were rather at an advantage. Members therefore called for the right thing to be done so that the policy could be enforced or changed altogether.

This brought up the issue of whether the policy should be retained, modified, or abolished altogether, and what would be involved in each situation. To this end, members asked whether other forms of bilingual policies existed elsewhere and in what form such policies existed. A member of the research team shared with the about bilingual education programs they were introduced to in two states in the U.S. The community members then urged the research team to influence policy makers as to the best direction to go so as to raise standards in our schools.

The meeting was then brought back to the advantages of the policy. This was when member queried, “if these arguments people are raising here in favor of the policy are true, how come the non-implementation schools (i.e., the private schools) perform better than our children at the national examinations after JSS 3?” Members were allowed to share ideas as to why the situation is so. Some of the reasons given were the seemingly weak supervision in the public schools as compared to that which exists in the private schools and its effect on time spent on task. Attention was also drawn to the difference in socio-economic background of people who enroll their children in the two types of

schools which also impact on children's performance. Parental support was also cited as one of the crucial factors as well as availability of materials.

Members wondered why in the face of such differences the Ministry has been unable to set differential standards (on examinations) for the rural public schools and the private schools. They urged the research team to have similar meetings with policy makers with the view of exposing them to some of the weaknesses in the school system so far as the language policy is concerned for immediate action to be taken before the situation worsens further.

The research team thanked members for attending and for their suggestions. The meeting ended with an announcement about a national forum being planned to share the broader findings and the community members expressed the desire to be represented when the time comes.

ASERET TEACHER TRAINING COLLEGE

TEACHER TRAINING COLLEGE PROFILE

Aseret is a teacher training college for women located in the Volta Region of Ghana. Built by the Roman Catholic Church, Aseret TTC started as a mission college but at the time of the team's visit it was a public institution. The college attracts students from all over the country with a majority coming from the Volta Region.

ATTITUDES AND PERCEPTIONS OF LANGUAGE POLICY AND USAGE

Administrators

Both the principal and vice principal are women from the Volta Region. The principal is a native Nkonya speaker and the vice principal is a native Ewe. They both spoke Ewe but only the vice principal could read and write it, having studied it from primary through secondary school to the training college level. The principal had studied Twi only at primary school and could speak it but could not read or write it. The principal has been teaching for 21 years, eight in this college; the vice principal has all her fourteen years teaching experience in this college. They have taught English language and Education respectively. They both came to their respective positions the very week that the team visited the college, following the former principal's promotion to the position of a District Director of Education and her transfer to one of the districts in the Volta Region. Before then, they had held the vice principal and Senior House Mistress positions respectively.

Both TTC administrators are aware of the language policy, can say exactly what it says, and work to ensure that students implement it when they are on teaching practice. They have a positive attitude

towards the policy. The principal believes that bilingual instruction fosters quicker and greater understanding of concepts. The vice principal, however, thinks that both English and Ghanaian language should be used for instruction at the lower primary level. According to her, “some concepts and expressions in English are difficult to express in Ghanaian language. Therefore, the use of both languages will foster understanding of concepts.” They both feel that the study of Ghanaian language as a subject in school up to the college level is relevant since “pupils and students should be able to read and write the mother tongue” and “teacher trainees will teach in the lower primary in it.” They both think that for the policy to be effective, lower primary textbooks should be in Ghanaian languages, except those for English teaching and learning.

Tutors

Researchers interviewed six tutors at the Aseret Teacher Training College: the department heads of Ghanaian Languages, English, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies and the senior tutor of Twi. Since the head of the Ghanaian Language department was an Ewe tutor, interviewing the senior Twi tutor ensured that a tutor of each of the Ghanaian languages offered by the school was in the sample. All tutors interviewed were from the Volta Region, except the Science tutor who came from the Greater Accra Region. Four tutors were native Ewe speakers, one was a native Twi speaker, and one spoke Ga.

To equip future teachers to teach in the target language it is useful if they see and hear their tutors teach using Ghanaian language. All the tutors interviewed were literate in Ewe except the Twi tutor who could only speak Ewe. Those literate in Ewe had studied it at the primary school level, but only two tutors (the Mathematics and the English tutors) had studied Ewe in SSS. Half of the tutors interviewed (Ewe, English, and Mathematics) studied Ewe at the TTC level and half did not. Despite the high level of these tutors’ proficiency in at least one of the two Ghanaian languages offered by the college, only the two Ghanaian language tutors said they teach all their lessons in Ghanaian language. The others said—and classroom observations confirmed—that they teach their lessons in English, including demonstration lessons for the lower primary level. Their reasons for teaching demonstration lessons in English were captured by the Mathematics and Science teachers:

Though I can teach in Ewe, the students studying Twi will suffer if I do that, so I use English which they all understand.

It is difficult to translate certain terms in Science like nitrogen, into the Ghanaian language.

The Science teacher’s remarks highlight two of the challenges of Mother Tongue education: teaching in a multilingual environment and finding appropriate terms in the mother tongue for academic language.

All tutors were aware of the language policy and could state it. Five out of the six interviewed had a positive attitude toward the policy. Their reasons varied:

It will enhance pupils' understanding of what is taught at the lower primary level and make them participate effectively in lessons.

It will help the children to adjust to school life early.

It will make pupils hold their language in high esteem.

They felt the policy is good and its implementation needs to be encouraged. They gave several suggestions for the effective implementation of the language policy. These included making Ghanaian language a SSS core subject, strict supervision of language policy implementation in schools, developing materials and conducting all examinations at the lower primary level in the Ghanaian languages, and running in-service training programs for all primary school teachers.

Only the Science tutor had a negative attitude towards the policy. He advocated an all-English MoI right from P1. He said,

The policy will not work since there will always be teachers at the lower primary level who will not be fluent in the prevalent Ghanaian language of the community where she/he is teaching. It is better to start the children in English so that they pick [up] the fundamentals or rudiments of the language since eventually that will be the medium of instruction.

All tutors agreed that their principal and vice principal support the implementation of the language policy by ensuring that each student of the college enrolls in one of the Ghanaian languages offered, by allowing extra classes to be conducted for that purpose, and by insisting that during the students' peer teaching all lower primary based lessons, except English language lessons, be taught in Ghanaian language.

TTC Students

Sixteen students, eight from PS2 and PS3 (i.e., the second and third year classes) were selected at random and interviewed. Thirteen of these were from the Volta Region, two from the Central Region and one from the Eastern Region. At the college level, 12 students study Ewe and four study Twi. Eleven were proficient in Ewe, which they acquired as a mother tongue, by staying among Ewes, or by learning it at school. The rest were proficient in Twi, which all but one had acquired in similar ways. One young woman had only learnt how to read and write Twi in the training college; it was striking that she was proficient yet had never studied it at primary or secondary school.

All the students were aware of the language policy and could state it. They all said they became aware of it from their lessons at the training college. The majority of them, 13 out of 16, had a positive attitude towards the policy. Three of them felt it “makes pupils at the lower primary feel at home in school” while the others said, “it makes the pupils understand their lessons better and interact better with each other and their teachers.”

The three who had negative attitudes toward the policy felt English should be used as the MoI right from P1. One remarked,

Ghanaian language should be used as the medium of instruction from Kindergarten to P1 but there should be a switch to English in P2 so that pupils in the public schools would be on the same level as their counterparts in the private schools. Ghanaian language should only be used to provide support in these classes.

All students suggested that Ghanaian language should be studied as a subject at the secondary school level to help prepare those who will eventually enter the training college and popularize it at the university level.

Language Use Inside and Outside the Classroom

All the lessons researchers observed at Aseret TTC were taught in English, except the Ghanaian language lessons and the lower primary based lessons which student teachers taught in the peer teaching sessions. Their tutors’ demonstration lessons were even taught in English. Also, the students interacted among themselves and with their tutors in English, both in class and out of class, except when the subject and MoI is Ghanaian language.

Availability of Textbooks and Teaching Materials

Generally, materials are available at Aseret TTC for teaching Ghanaian language as a subject and using it as a MoI. Books available include novels and literature such as Fia Tsatsala, Amedzro etolia, Togbui Kpelo II, Adela megbloe wo katao and a book of Ewe phonology, all in Ewe. Twi materials consisted of Boa wo ho and Twi kasa ho adesua bi. Copies of these are available even at the college’s library.

However, apart from the Ewe and Twi translations of the P1 Mathematics and Environmental Studies textbooks supplied to the colleges by GTZ the previous academic year, no textbooks existed in Ghanaian language for the other subjects. Students are taught, therefore, to make other supplementary materials. At times students are given samples of materials to replicate. At other times tutors demonstrate to students how to make their own materials, such as flash cards, drawings, models of solid figures like pyramid, sentence cards, poems, word cards, games, and flannel boards.

Lessons and Medium of Instruction

As already mentioned, tutors taught all lessons, except Ghanaian Language lessons, in English. They involved the students in most of their lessons, stressing how to teach the underlying concepts.

Samples of the lessons observed are as described in the sections that follow.

Ghanaian Language lesson

In the Ghanaian Language P2 peer teaching lesson observed, the future teacher taught the class a poem entirely in Ewe. The teacher illustrated what she was expected to do in practice by presenting a sample poem as well as actual objects and diagrams of specific items and characters in the poem.

The lesson began with the teacher calling on the class to sing a song. They sang three different songs. After that she informed them what they would be doing that day and asked whether they knew the main character of the poem. She said, "Today, we are going to learn a nice poem about the frog. Those who have seen a frog before should raise their hands." She then called two students who raised their hands, one after the other, to tell where they saw a frog and what it looked like. After that she showed them a picture of a frog and mentioned that it stays on both the land and the water. Next certain key words were isolated and discussed, including "dress," "hat," and "handkerchief." For each item she showed them a sample and demonstrated how it is used. She then presented the poem with a diagram to illustrate it. The teacher then gave a model reading of the poem, after which she read it line by line, asking the class to read in chorus after her. The process was repeated several times and after that sections of the class were asked to recite the poem. When every section of the class had finished, individual students were called upon to recite the poem with claps for the successful ones. Next, the class's attention was drawn to the accompanying diagram and they described what was in it. Some of the descriptions were, "I can see a frog wearing a hat that looks like that of my grandfather," and "I can see a frog wearing a dress." Next, individual students were called to recite the poem this time acting it. The poem was about a frog that dressed up for a walk. It wore a hat and told a friend it had a lot of handkerchiefs. The lesson ended with the teacher asking the students to do a little appreciation of the poem (i.e., saying what aspect they liked).

English Language lesson

The English language lessons observed at Aseret were all delivered entirely in English and characterized by questions and answers. In a typical lesson observed in one of the PS3 classes on "Types of Questions on Comprehension Passages" the teacher mostly used the question and answer method in teaching.

He used two already prepared passages with accompanying questions to develop two types of comprehension questions, the questions and inferential types of question using the question-and-answer method. With the understanding from the sample passages and the accompanying questions,

the students were able to frame their own questions of the two types of questions treated for the day using other passages.

Mathematics lesson

Most of the Mathematics lessons were practical and student-centered. For instance, in one of the demonstration lessons observed on how to find the area of a triangle, the teacher simply asked the students to take sheets from their jotters and to fold the sheets along the diagonal to develop the formula for the area of a triangle from that for the area of a rectangle. The lesson was delivered entirely in English.

CONCLUSIONS AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Data collected from Aseret TTC indicate that all the students, tutors, and administrators are aware of Ghana's government school language policy and can state it.

Second, a majority of students (13 out of 16), tutors (five out of six) and administrators have a positive attitude towards the policy.

Third, Aseret tutors teach all their primary school-based demonstration lessons, except Ghanaian Language lessons, in English, but they expect the teacher trainees to be able to follow the policy and teach in Ghanaian language when they are on teaching practice. Data gathered from Aseret also point to the fact that the principal, vice principal, and all the college tutors enforce implementation of the language policy by the teacher trainees. Though observations conducted reveal that the trainees were able to teach in the local language it is not very clear whether they could teach all subject matter of the content areas that way and what their attitude would be when they graduate from college and meet situations where they cannot easily translate content from English to Ghanaian language. One of the questions this raises is, To what extent the teacher trainees are likely to be affected by non-implementation practices in the college when they graduate? Are they complying with the directives from their tutors and principal because they need to do that to be certificated or do they actually believe in the implementation of the policy? So far we do not have data to answer these and other related questions that immediately come out of the data.

Furthermore, the study has revealed that materials for use in teaching using Ghanaian language are not adequate at the college. This has negative implications for the teacher trainees.

SICNARF TEACHER TRAINING COLLEGE

TEACHER TRAINING COLLEGE PROFILE

Sicnarf is a teacher training college for men and women in the Volta Region of Ghana. Each class has four streams. Most of the students come from Volta Region where Ewe is the predominant language spoken. Out of the 16 students interviewed two of them hailed from Greater Accra and Central Region while the rest were from Volta Region.

ATTITUDES AND PERCEPTIONS OF LANGUAGE POLICY AND USE

Administrators

The principal is a man from the Volta Region with 10 years teaching experience in training college, nine of them in the present college. He taught for the first six years and for the last three years he has been the principal of the college. He is aware of the government language policy for schools and came to know of the policy when he was a TTC student. He said he liked the present policy because "children think first in their mother tongues and should be given the opportunity to learn to read and write their language." He added, " People's culture is best learnt through the use of their mother tongue/native language."

The vice principal, a woman from the Volta Region with 21 years teaching experience in the present college, has been in her present position only one year. She first became aware of the language policy when she was a TTC student and was taught more about it when she was a student at University of Cape Coast. She believes that the policy is good and that Ghanaian Language must be made a compulsory subject in Senior Secondary Schools (SSS). This, she said, was because students who do not study Ghanaian Language in the SSS find it difficult to study it at the training college due to lack of foundation. She also suggested that private schools be made to go by the policy.

Tutors

Most of the tutors were from various districts of the Volta Region. For example, out of the seven tutors interviewed, only one was from the Eastern Region where the predominant language spoke is Twi. The rest were from the various districts of Volta Region.

All the tutors were aware of the government language policy and most of them had learnt about the policy at TTC. All of them were in favor of the policy and believed that using the local language as MoI helps children understand the concepts being taught and also helps them to value and maintain their culture and tradition. Some of the tutors suggested that the study of Ghanaian language be made compulsory in SSS so that those who come to the training college will not find it difficult to learn the

language both as content and as MoI. They said those who did not study a Ghanaian language at SSS were finding it difficult to study it at the teacher training college.

TTC Students

Even though the college is expected to admit students from various parts of the country, most of the Sinarf students were from the various districts of Volta Region. For example, of the 16 students (eight males and eight females) interviewed, only two were from Greater Accra and Central Regions respectively. The rest were from Volta Region, most of them from two particular districts.

All were aware of the government's language policy, were in favor of it, and had learnt about it at the college. They were in favor of the policy because they believed that children who come to P1 understand only the mother tongue, so if you teach such children using English or any other foreign language you will only succeed in confusing them. Using the mother tongue would make children feel more comfortable at school. They said that at the college they were taught how to use the Ghanaian language to teach in the primary school.

LANGUAGE USE INSIDE AND OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM

At the time of the researchers' visit, first year (PS1) students were writing their mock examination, so researchers only observed PS2 and PS3 classes. Except for Ghanaian language class, English was the MoI for all other subjects. Students also communicated among themselves in English with occasional code switching into Ewe.

Outside the classroom, tutors and students and students among themselves communicated in English with occasional code switching into Ewe. On one occasion this researcher heard the Twi tutor speaking with one of the native Twi-speaking students in Twi.

AVAILABILITY OF TEXTBOOKS AND TEACHING MATERIALS

Only two official textbooks are available for teaching and learning Ghanaian Language as subjects in this college. These are Mathematics books (Mina MiasrÉ AkÉnta) and Social Studies books (Mina miasrÉ DzÉdzÉ menutinunya). Both books are for PS1 only. All the Ghanaian language textbooks were privately owned by both the students and the teachers. These included Ewegbe, Nutinunya, Ewe Phonogrammar and Ewegbe fe Tutuyo for Ewe language. For Twi language there were a grammar and phonology textbook and Twi Kasa Mmara.

LESSONS AND MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION

Researchers observed a total of seven lessons in PS2 in the following subjects: Religious and Moral Education, English, Ewe, Twi, and Mathematics. (Ewe and Twi are the only Ghanaian languages offered as subject in this college.) In four lessons students were peer teaching. Apart from the

Ghanaian Language lesson, the MoI for all the other subjects was English with no code switching into any other language. The only Ghanaian language taught at the time of observation in PS2 was Ewe; no code switching to any other language was observed. The teaching method used by both teachers and by students (during peer teaching) was questions and answers with groups. Students were also actively involved in class activities.

In PS3, researchers made three observations in Mathematics, Science and Ghanaian language (Twi). Here, there was no peer teaching. The MoI was English with no code switching into any other language. The tutors' primary teaching method involved asking individuals questions and answers. The students were also actively involved in class activities. In the Twi lesson the teacher took the students through poem recital. The class was very lively and every student was actively involved in the class activities.

CONCLUSIONS AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

From the data collected from Sagnar TTC, there is every indication that all students, tutors, vice principal and the principal are aware of the government school language policy and can state it. All the students and the tutors including the principal and the vice principal are in favor of the school language policy. Some of the tutors suggested that the study of Ghanaian language be made compulsory in the Senior Secondary School.

All the lessons observed were taught in English without code switching except in Ghanaian Language lessons. Even though the tutors themselves did not use Ghanaian language to teach subjects other than Ghanaian language, they emphasized the adherence to the language policy to the teacher trainees, that is, the need to use Ghanaian language in P1 through P3. Interviews with students revealed that both the tutors and the principal and the vice principal enforce the teacher trainees' implementation of the language policy. The study also revealed a lack of sufficient materials for teaching and learning Ghanaian language. If students are to learn how to teach effectively with materials, then they need to watch tutors model how to use the materials and they need to be provided with these materials for teaching practice.